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**The Ancient Parish of Newchurch=
Kenyon in Culbeth with Risley**

**A History of the
Parish of Newchurch**

The Life Story of the . .

Notorious Colonel Blood

The Distinguished Career

of Bishop Wilson

A Brief Survey of the

Parish Registers, etc., etc.

With Illustrations

BY THE

Rev. OSCAR REGINALD PLANT

Rector of Newchurch

PUBLISHED 1928

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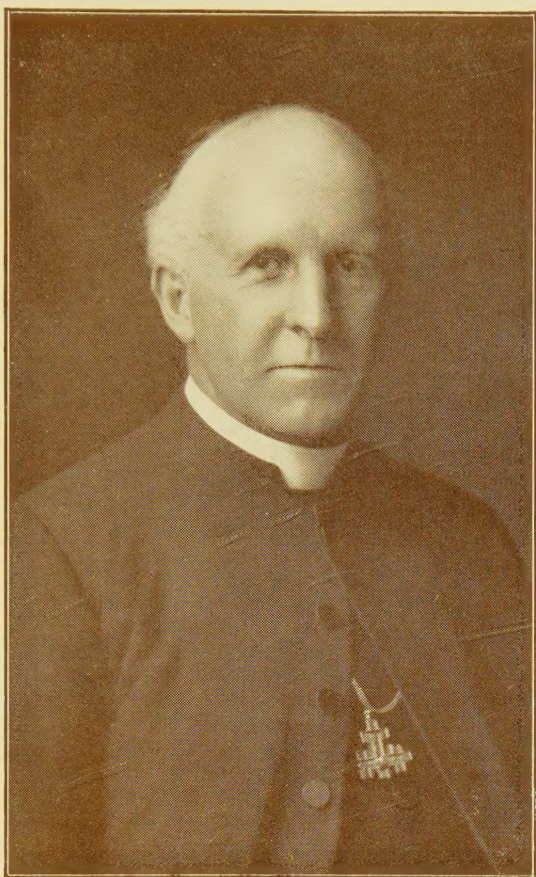
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Printed at the Works of the Guardian Press
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L000117560

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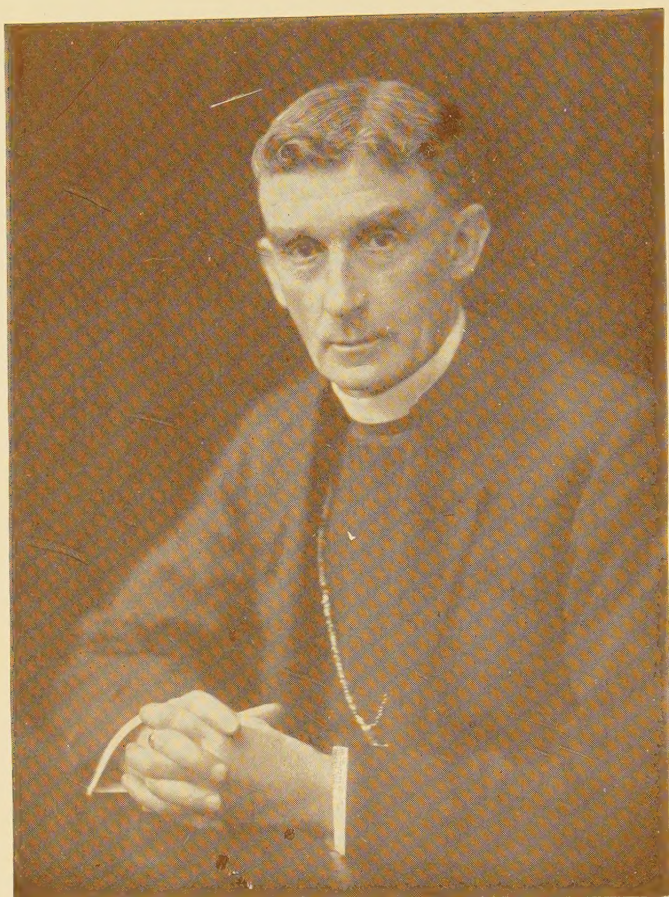


The Most Revd. and Right Honble. COSMO GORDON LANG, D.D.

The King has been pleased to approve the nomination of the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D., Lord Archbishop of York, Primate of England and Metropolitan, to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, to become vacant on November 12th, 1928, by the resignation of the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Randall Thomas Davidson, G.C.V.O., D.D., Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan.

AN APPRECIATION OF DR. LANG.

The selection of Dr. Lang has not come as a surprise. He was regarded as the natural successor of Dr. Randall Davidson, not only because of his special qualifications, but also from the fact that no other member of the Episcopal Bench possesses his intimate knowledge of the world-wide affairs of the Church. Dr. Lang has had a brilliant and remarkable career. He is a man of sound judgment, wide outlook, real vision and powers of leadership—qualities which are likely to develop at Lambeth. It is true that he is cautious, but when a cause is large enough and vital enough and really appeals to him, he becomes thoroughly enthusiastic.



The Right Revd. **ALBERT AUGUSTUS DAVID, D.D.,**

Lord Bishop of Liverpool.

PREFACE

The object of the writer of this book is to help to commemorate, in as fitting a manner as possible, the 400th Anniversary of the Ancient Parish of Newchurch, near Warrington, and the Silver Jubilee of the present Church, by recognizing the great milestones in the development and progress of the Village and Church during the passing centuries, and to hand on to succeeding generations as much information as possible so that posterity may carry on the work of progress from where we leave off.

The writer's thanks are due to many who have supplied information and placed their knowledge of local history at his disposal, and also acknowledges the great help he has received by consulting the works of Gardiner, Baines, Green, Kaye, and the many Parish Registers of Newchurch and other ancient documents.

Warmest thanks are also due to Mr. Joseph Cooke for his valuable help.

O. R. P.

Newchurch Rectory,
Near Warrington.
June, 1928.



The Right Honble. THE EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B.,
Patron of the Benefice of Newchurch-Kenyon.



The Late Right Revd. FRANCIS JAMES CHAVASSE, D.D.,

Lord Bishop of Liverpool from 1900 to 1923.

Who consecrated the present Church on Saturday, July 30th, 1904.

A History of the Ancient Parish of Newchurch-Kenyon, near Warrington

REMARKABLE CHURCH HISTORY



NEWCHURCH-KENYON PARISH CHURCH.

THE forthcoming 400th Anniversary of the Parish Church will revive some remarkable historical records, and once more demonstrate that facts may be stranger than fiction. The Parish Church, originally a Chapel-of-ease to Winwick, was probably built before 1528, a tower being added in 1691. Colonel John Holcroft, of Parliamentary fame, bequeathed a gold chain towards the re-building of the nave, which was destroyed and again erected in 1753. The whole structure of red brick, with stone quoins, although largely overgrown with ivy, could scarcely be described as beautiful, its squat tower being almost overshadowed by a broad and somewhat ungainly nave, with few pretensions to architectural style.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

With the Quadricentennial Celebration of the Old Church in October will be observed the 25th Anniversary of the erection of the present Church after the disastrous fire of 1903. In the early hours of Sunday, April 19th, of that year, the old Church was burned to the ground, with the sole exception of the tower, a portion of which served as a vestry, the fire having arisen probably through the overheating of the flues. All the stained-glass windows, frescoes and sepulchral monuments—none of the inscriptions having been previously copied—perished in the flames, as well as the pews and other fittings. Over the altar was a copy of a painting by Raibolini, the original of which is in the National Gallery, and three stained-glass windows had recently been inserted to the memory of Thomas Wilson (Bishop of Sodor and Man), who in December, 1686, was licensed to the curacy of Newchurch, of which his maternal uncle, Dr. Sherlock, was the Rector; Dr. Black, also a former Rector of more recent date, and Queen Victoria.

COLLECTING BOXES DATED 1663.

Fortunately, the registers, the valuable plate, the bells, two dated collecting boxes of 1663, the brasses, and two portraits of former incumbents were rescued from the conflagration. The present Church is a very stately edifice of stone, consisting of a nave with six bays of Norman arches, chancel, north and south aisles, clergy vestry, choir vestries and a beautiful tower, which contains a clock and a peal of eight bells. The Church is dedicated to no saint, but is called "Newchurch" Parish Church, in memory of Bishop Wilson, who, as stated, was a former priest in charge of the Church and district, and became famous in both Church and State. It serves the largest parish in England, covering an area of 10 square miles.

A MAGNIFICENT PEAL OF BELLS.

Newchurch Parish Church is a prominent landmark for miles round, and its fine peal of bells may be heard the full extent of the extensive parish on a fine day. Parishioners are proud of the fact that it is the largest country parish, and on the extreme edge, of the Liverpool diocese—midway almost between Warrington and Leigh, and approached by railway from Kenyon Junction and from Culcheth Stations. The patron of the living is the Earl of Derby, in whose family it has been for 399 years.

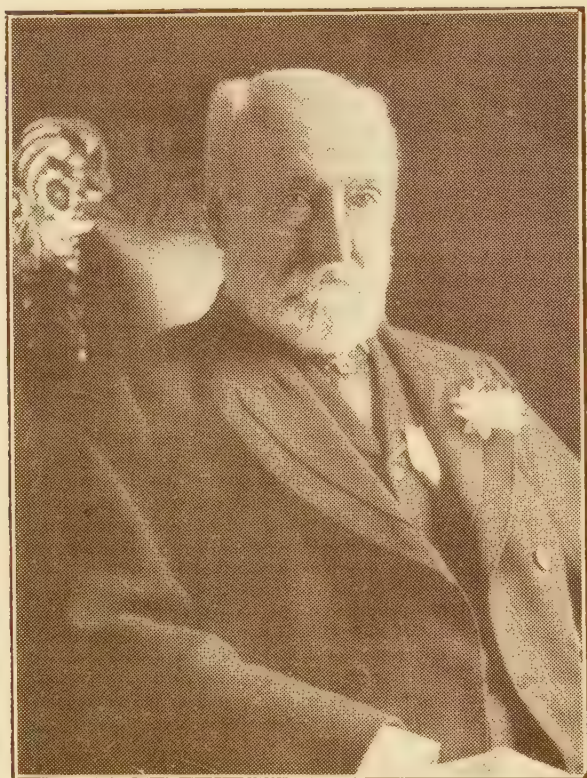
The peal of eight bells is of full rich musical quality of tone, in perfect tune, with true harmonics, i.e., each bell is not only in correct musical relationship with the other bells of the peal, but also in absolute tune in itself in its own harmonics, on the principle initiated by the late Canon Simpson, amplified and perfected by John Taylor and Co., Loughborough.



The Right Honble. THE EARL OF LATHOM.

Past Grand Warden of England, Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master of West Lancashire, who laid the North-East Foundation Stone of the Church with full Masonic Honours and Ceremonies on October 13th, 1903, in the presence of a large and distinguished assembly of Freemasons attired in their full Masonic Regalia.

After laying the Foundation Stone, the Earl of Lathom, addressing the Assembly, said: "Be it known to you that we, as lawful masons, true and faithful to the laws of our country, and engaged by solemn obligation to erect handsome buildings to be serviceable to the brethren, and to fear God, the Great Architect of the universe. We have among us, concealed from the eyes of all men, secrets which may not be revealed, and which no man has discovered; but these secrets are lawful and honourable, and not repugnant to the laws of God or man. They were entrusted in peace and honour to the masons of ancient times; and having been faithfully transmitted to us, it is our duty to give them unimpaired to posterity. Our craft or calling would not have lasted for so many centuries, nor should we have had so many illustrious brethren in our order ready to promote our laws and further our interests, had that not been done. We are assembled here to-day in the name of Him who is the Wisdom and the Light to lay the foundation stone of a church, the object of which is prayer and praise, and religious instruction to the residents in this neighbourhood, which we pray God may prosper as it seemeth good to him; and, as the first duty of masons in any undertaking is to invoke the blessing of the Great Architect of the Universe on their work, I call upon you to unite with our Provincial Grand Chaplain in an address of praise."



The Late Squire, Capt. THOMAS ELLAMES WITHINGTON, J.P.,

for 55 years Churchwarden of Newchurch, and the last resident squire at Culcheth Hall. Born 1831. Died 1915.

His loss is widely mourned, few men were better loved. As a real country squire he lived among his own people, identified himself with their daily life, and cared for them as a father for his own children. Kindly, accessible, courteous, genial, he was known and venerated by a whole country-side as a very perfect English gentleman. A devoted Churchman, his place in the House of God was seldom empty. His generosity was boundless, and when the old historic church was burned down in 1903 he headed the subscription list with a gift of £500 for the building of the present new church, and laid the south-east foundation stone on Saturday, October 26th, 1903.

Three bells were the gift of Miss M. M. S. Marsh; two bells were the gift of the Misses Leigh; one bell was the gift of Mr. Arthur Withington and Miss Withington; one bell was the gift of Miss M. Allen; one bell was the gift of the parishioners.

The following is a description of the bells: Treble, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cwts., F sharp; 2nd, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cwts., E sharp; 3rd, 4 cwts., D sharp; 4th, $4\frac{1}{4}$ cwts., C sharp; 5th, 5 cwts., B; 6th, $6\frac{1}{2}$ cwts., A sharp; 7th, $8\frac{1}{2}$ cwts., G sharp; tenor, 12 cwts., F sharp. Total, 47 cwts.

EVIDENCE OF THE GLACIAL EPOCH.

There is not wanting in the parish evidences of the glacial epoch, or the great ice age, in its clays and numerous boulders. The boulders are either granite or lava (Andesite), and have been, it is presumed, transported from Cumberland and Westmorland. Several boulders are some tons in weight, and have been buried in the farm lands, whilst others have been used as road metal. There is, in fact, a great deal that is of historic interest in the parish. A Roman urn, containing some bones, which was dug up in a field, showing a "basket" pattern on the rim, is now in the Warrington Museum.

OTHER HISTORICAL DATA.

The deeds in connection with Culcheth Hall show that a community of people was settled here in Newchurch-Culcheth in the 13th century—in the year of our Lord 1305. The old workhouse with an ancient sundial over the doorway—all still in excellent preservation—contains a prison cell and an old oak beam dated 1621. There are many ancient pack horse roads in the village, and many of the rows of cottages are converted handloom factories. The only part of the ancient road to Warrington, which was used in the 13th century, lies between the New Inn and the Rectory.

THE RECTORY AND GROUNDS.

The Rectory was built in 1812, on a site of two acres on the Warrington Road, quite a mile away from the Church. It is an attractive ivy-clad example of Georgian architecture with a fine period porchway and stone entrance. The keystone of the porchway is a cast-stone shield, representing the figure of the Virgin Mary in clinging robes, standing upon a marble pavement with extended arms, between and gripping two pillars. The left pillar is charged with a Church and there is an escutcheon of the arms of Sodor and Man at the base of the shield, which is surmounted with a jewelled mitre and is recorded in the College of Arms. There are many ancient beech trees and ornamental shrubs in the grounds.



THE ANCIENT DOORWAY OF THE RECTORY,

Completely restored by the present Rector in 1925.

The original old Door-knocker with inscription can be seen in the picture.

The Rectory and grounds are surrounded by 26 acres of glebe fields, through which there is a private pathway to Culcheth Railway Station. It stands well back from the road and has a pretty approach. The grounds are well tended. A very fine stained-glass window of heraldic design meets the gaze at the top of the staircase, figuring the arms of the Sees of York, Chester, Liverpool, and Sodor and Man, with cross bands in the corner panels containing the names of "Paulinus" and "Lindesfarne."



The Rev. OSCAR REGINALD PLANT,
Rector of Newchurch-Kenyon, 1925.

- | | | | |
|------|---|--------------|---|
| 1886 | Born, Bowdon, Cheshire. | 1917 | Chaplain to the 8th Batt. The Border Regiment. |
| 1905 | University College, Durham, to 1907. | 1919 | Personal Letter of Thanks from the Prime Minister for Valuable Services to the State. |
| 1908 | St. Aidan's Theological College to 1910. | 1919 | Chaplain to the Ministry of Pensions Hospital, Marine Drive, Bridlington. |
| 1910 | Ordained by the Right Rev. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, D.D., Lord Bishop of Southwell. | 1919 | Founder of the Guild of S. George for Boys. |
| 1910 | Junior Curate of Ripley Parish Church, Derbyshire, to 1912. | 1912 to 1919 | Held all the most distinguished appointments in Freemasonry. |
| 1912 | Senior Curate of Christ Church, Bridlington, and Curate-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church, South Cliff, Bridlington. | 1920 | District Commissioner Boy Scouts Association for the East Coast of Yorkshire, Bridlington and District Association. |
| 1915 | Chairman and Joint Secretary of the Belgian Refugee Relief Fund. | 1925 | Appointed Rector of Newchurch by the Right Honble. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B. |
| 1916 | Appointed first Vicar of Emmanuel Church, Bridlington, on the nomination of his Grace the Archbishop of York, the Most Rev. and Right Honble. Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D. | 1925 | Appointed Chaplain to the Culcheth Cottage Homes. |
| 1916 | Chaplain of the 6th Hunts. Cyclist Battalion. | 1925 | Surrogate for Granting Marriage Licences. |
| 1916 | Chaplain of the Actors' Church Union | 1925 | Assistant District Commissioner for South Lancashire and Warrington Boy Scouts Association. |
| 1916 | Chaplain of the Royal Red Cross Hospital for the Wounded. | | |
| 1917 | Assistant Chaplain to the Lancashire Fusiliers. | | |



The Right Revd. WILLIAM TEMPLE, D.Litt., D.D.

"The King has been pleased to approve the nomination of the Right Reverend William Temple, D.Litt., D.D., Lord Bishop of Manchester, to the Archbishopric of York when rendered vacant by the translation of the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D., Lord Archbishop of York, Primate of England and Metropolitan, to the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

AN APPRECIATION OF DR. TEMPLE.

From every point of view the choice of Dr. Temple is an excellent one. He has great intellectual gifts, administrative capacity of a high order, tremendously wide vision, and a genius for friendship. He is an ardent reformer, social and ecclesiastical, with very decided views on political, theological and philosophical subjects, as well as on matters affecting Church government.

DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT RELICS.

Among the discoveries which were made during the restoration work was a pew out of the ancient Church, which the Rector has had fixed in the Church porch. It had, presumably, been removed from the gallery of the old Church before it was destroyed by fire and been used as a garden seat. A number of old name plates from the pews were also found in a cupboard at the Rectory. The old Church contained a number of square box-like sittings or pews, dating from 1717 onwards, and the name plates indicate various old families who occupied them. These have been mounted and placed on an oak panel in the clergy vestry. Other relics of past centuries found at the Rectory were the old keys, used when the Rev. Thomas Wilson, who became Bishop of Sodor and Man, was in charge. These, too, have been mounted on brass discs and dated 1663.

OLD PRINTS OF BIBLICAL SUBJECTS.

A set of six old prints, going back to 1721, were also discovered, and these have been suitably framed in oak by Mr. Plant and are interesting to look upon in the clergy vestry. There is a colour in the prints which cannot be matched to-day. They represent: The Birth of Christ; the Wise Men; the Sermon on the Mount; Mary and Martha; Martyrdom of Stephen; Elijah carried up to Heaven. There is also a rare photo-print of the Archbishop of York, Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D., who has now been translated to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and is now the Primate of all England.

PRE-REFORMATION CHALICE.

Newchurch has one of the most interesting histories, which architecture has preserved, and possesses Communion plate of great value. The silver Communion cup of peculiar design was given by Dr. Richard Sherlock, Rector of Winwick, to his nephew, Bishop Wilson. The vessel stands six and a half inches high and measures four and a half inches across the top, as well as across the base. It is of the wineglass shape, and bears traces of gilding on the outside. The cup has been hammered out by a local smith from a pre-Reformation chalice. Examination by a magnifying glass reveals distinct signs of a cross, which frequently occurs on one side of the bowl of such chalices. The cup is somewhat roughly fashioned and bears no hallmark. It holds the most honoured place in the list of local church plate, and is one of the very few known examples of pre-Reformation chalices in the world. It is a connecting link, both in material and in features of design, between the typical pre-Reformation chalice and the post-Reformation Communion cup.

THE CULCHETH COTTAGE HOMES

WHEN the Board decided to remove the children under their care from the then existing environment in Salford, they purchased an estate at Culcheth, six miles from Warrington, an unspoiled country district in the healthiest part of South Lancashire, in the Parish of Newchurch.

The estate, which cost £4,500, contained $46\frac{3}{4}$ statute acres of good farm land. It was purchased in 1899, and on it the Board erected a group of Cottage Homes for the accommodation of 288 children and a staff of officers.

In 1903, at a cost of £61,211 for building and an additional £2,500 for furnishing, a model village was planned and erected. No pains were spared to make the colony complete in every way, and the result amply justifies the thoughtful foresight and unselfish labour spent on the project by the members of the Board at that time.

The colony consists of 22 semi-detached and two detached cottages to accommodate 12 to 14 children in each; a hospital designed in wards to accommodate 32 patients; a detached home for the nursing staff, connected to the hospital by a covered way, and a detached house for the use of the Superintendent.

The object in view in planning this Colony was to provide for the destitute children of Salford a "home away from home"—a home in the heart of the country amid ideal surroundings and away from the overcrowded and often squalid neighbourhood that most of them had known from infancy.

This policy of making a "Homeland" of the Colony has been steadily pursued throughout its history and with marked success, and "Homeland" has become the actual title for general use. The staff and children attend at the Parish Church each Sunday morning at 10-30 a.m., and the Rector, who is the chaplain of the Homes, prepares them for confirmation, teaches in the day school twice a week, arranges their Sunday school and children's services, and looks after their spiritual life generally.

In each Home are placed not more than twelve children, whose ages range from two to fifteen years, in charge of a Foster Mother (and in the case of some boys' Homes of a Foster Father and Mother). Each child has its own separate bed, its own private locker, and its private toilet utensils.



The Rt. Rev. H. GRESFORD JONES, D.D.,

Bishop of Warrington,

And Rector of the Parish of Winwick, the Mother Parish of Newchurch-Kenyon.

Photo by Russell, London.



THE OLD AND HISTORIC PARISH CHURCH, NEWCHURCH-KENYON.
Completely destroyed by fire in the early hours of the morning on Sunday, April 19th, 1903.
One of the first Churches of the Reformation.

Uniformity in the Homes is avoided as much as possible, and the Foster parents are encouraged to exercise their individuality, and, while conforming to the general rules of the Colony, to conduct their Homes naturally and spontaneously.

The children attend school until the age of fourteen. The buildings generally and the classrooms in particular are planned on a liberal scale and are generously equipped. During school age the children have every opportunity of physical training both by definite instruction and by organised games—special attention being given to swimming, for which a large and handsome bath has been erected.

When a child has passed its fourteenth birthday it leaves school, and while remaining in the Colony spends its school-hours in one or other of the industrial shops, each of which is under the control of an experienced tradesman or tradeswoman, and where it receives careful tuition and acquires practical knowledge.

For the girls there are provided a Sewing Room, well equipped for all dressmaking, and which supplies the Colony with most of its garments, linen and its hosiery; a Laundry that affords training in the use of machinery and in all branches of laundry work; and in addition the Homes themselves furnish tuition in cooking and all domestic duties.


The boys have the choice of the Shoemaker's Shop, in which all boot repairs are executed, and a large proportion of new work is undertaken; the Joiner's Shop, in which all renewals of and repairs to woodwork for the Homes are made; the Bakehouse which supplies the Colony with all its bread and cake; the Plumber's and Engineer's Shop, which provides the Colony with electric light and with water and heat; the Painter's Shop, which is responsible for all decoration and re-glazing on the Colony. Gardening is taught to both boys and girls. In addition every boy has the opportunity of joining the Brass Band.

These numerous centres of activity, together with the large mixed farm, make the Colony practically self-contained, and it is a rare occurrence to see any outside tradesmen at work on the grounds.

The value of the training is shown when the children leave the Homes, and almost without exception they do well and make headway.

ANCIENT CUSTOMS RECALLED

HOW RISLEY DERIVES ITS NAME

THER interesting and valuable relics of the past, besides the silver Communion cup, hammered out from a pre-Reformation chalice, have been preserved, and the historical records going back several centuries, which have been kept intact at Newchurch Parish Church, will comprise an outstanding feature of the forthcoming Quadricentennial Celebration of the old, and the Silver Jubilee of the new Parish Church.

Besides the ancient Communion cup, the paten in use is of a very quaint type, and is slightly bent and out of shape. The handsome silver flagon is a magnificent specimen of church plate, bearing the date of 1763, though probably much older. It was bequeathed to the Church by Edward Leech in his will dated 13th November, 1760, and proved at Chester on February 23rd, three years later.

MIDDLE OF THE 17th CENTURY.

The two ancient collecting boxes, dated 1663, referred to, were used in the Parish Church until the middle of the 17th Century. In those days the boxes were only handed by the wardens to the squire, the doctor and one or two other leading members of the parish and congregation, and gold coins were nearly always contributed. Three pieces of gold in those days were more than sufficient to meet the Church expenses for a month, money going much further in spending value than it does to-day. Collections in Church were monthly, or as required. The wardens knew how much they wanted, and before the offerings were presented at the Holy Table, they would tilt the boxes and look at the coins to ascertain if there was sufficient. If the amount was not enough for their purposes they would proceed to collect from other worshippers in Church.

CONSTABLES' TRUNCHEONS AND HAND-GRIPS.

Three constables' truncheons and hand-grips were discovered in the old parish chest, which in 1909 had not been opened for 20 years, owing to the loss of the keys. They belong to the reigns of King George IV. (1820), King William IV. (1830), and Queen Victoria (1837). These truncheons were assigned by the ruling monarchs to the High Sheriff of the county, who was entrusted with the execution of the law. The High Sheriff then handed over the truncheons to the squires of the villages, who, in turn, sought out some worthy villager to act as constable and keep order, presenting him with a truncheon, hand-grip and a key as aids to carrying out his duties. The earliest constable's account book in the village chest at Newchurch is dated 1813.



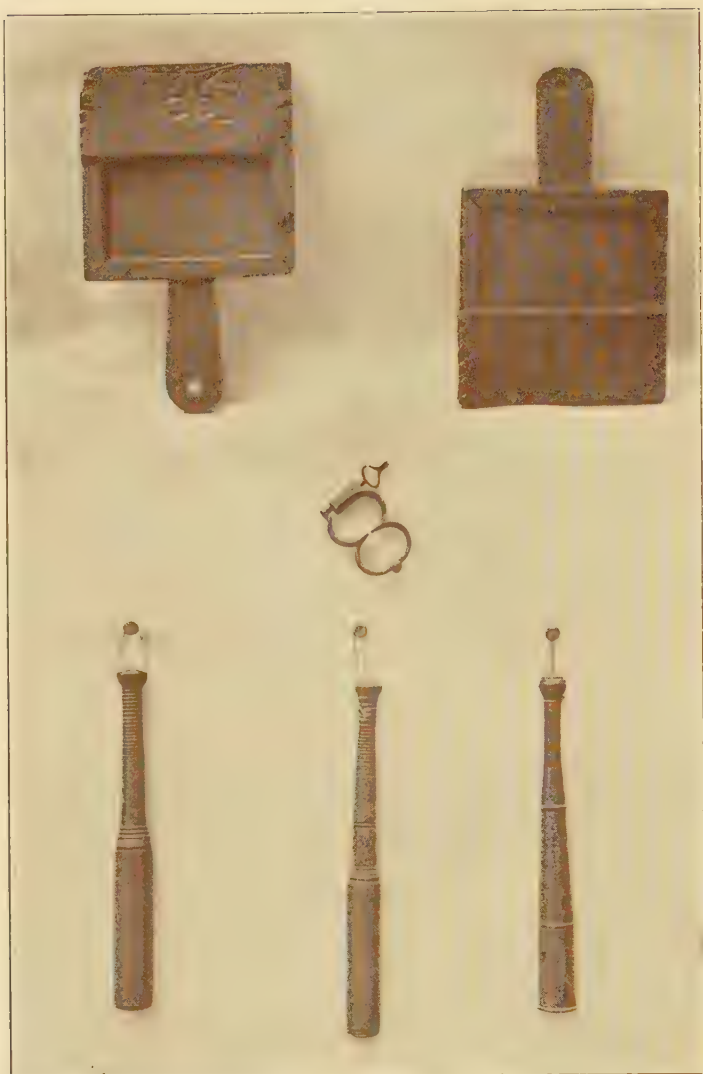
BISHOP WILSON.

Curate-in-Charge of Newchurch, 1686 to 1692.



SILVER FLAGON and PRE-REFORMATION CHALICE,

Newchurch Parish Church.



OLD COLLECTING BOXES,
HAND GRIP and CONSTABLES' TRUNCHEONS.
Newchurch Parish Church.

REGULAR "BOBBIES" AND "PEELERS."

It was Sir Robert Peel who introduced the improved system of police—first into Ireland as Secretary, by the institution of the regular Irish Constabulary, nick-named after him "Peelers," for the protection of life and property, and later, both during the reign of Queen Victoria, he introduced a Bill in Parliament establishing the Metropolitan Police, followed in due course by the extension of the principle to the provinces—by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 to boroughs, and by Acts of 1839 and 1840 the formation of a paid county police force was permitted by the Justices, and made compulsory after an interval of 15 years by the Police Act of 1856. Originally intended maybe as a compliment to Sir Robert Peel, police officers are still occasionally spoken of as "Bobbies." It was not, however, until 1909 that the three old truncheons and hand-grips which had been previously used in the village, were presented to the Rector and Wardens by the Parish Council of Culcheth for safe keeping in the vestry of the Parish Church.

THE HAMLET OF RISLEY.

The hamlet of Risley, which is in the Parish of Newchurch, takes its name from one Thomas Risley, who was born in the year 1629. He was a Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, and was ordained deacon and priest of the Church of England in 1662 by the Bishop of Norwich. By the Act of Uniformity of the same year, and not agreeing to the use of the Book of Common Prayer, he was obliged to resign his Fellowship at Oxford. From his Chair at the University he retired to his estate at Risley, but did not renounce his orders in the Church of England. By coming to Risley he availed himself of the Five Mile Act of 1665, formed a small congregation of people, and built a little Chapel. In order to Minister to these people in his own way Thomas Risley was obliged to leave his family for 27 years until the Act of Toleration was passed in 1689, which established "Dissent." He died at the age of 86 years, in the year 1715, and was buried in the chapel grounds at Risley, being succeeded by his son, John Risley.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL.

The doctrinal basis on which the chapel was founded was changed, and the building became a Unitarian Chapel, and remained so until the year 1839. In that year the Unitarian right of possession was disputed by the Rector of Winwick, and the building reverted, after a struggle, to the Presbyterian body, and a new trust deed was drawn up. It is highly probable that if the Rector of Winwick had delayed the case a further five years the Unitarians would have taken advantage of the Dissenting Chapels Act, 1844, and kept the building.

ANCIENT TERRITORIAL FAMILIES

THE HOLCROFTS, THE RISLEYS AND THE CULCHETHS

HISTORICAL RECORDS IN PARISH REGISTERS

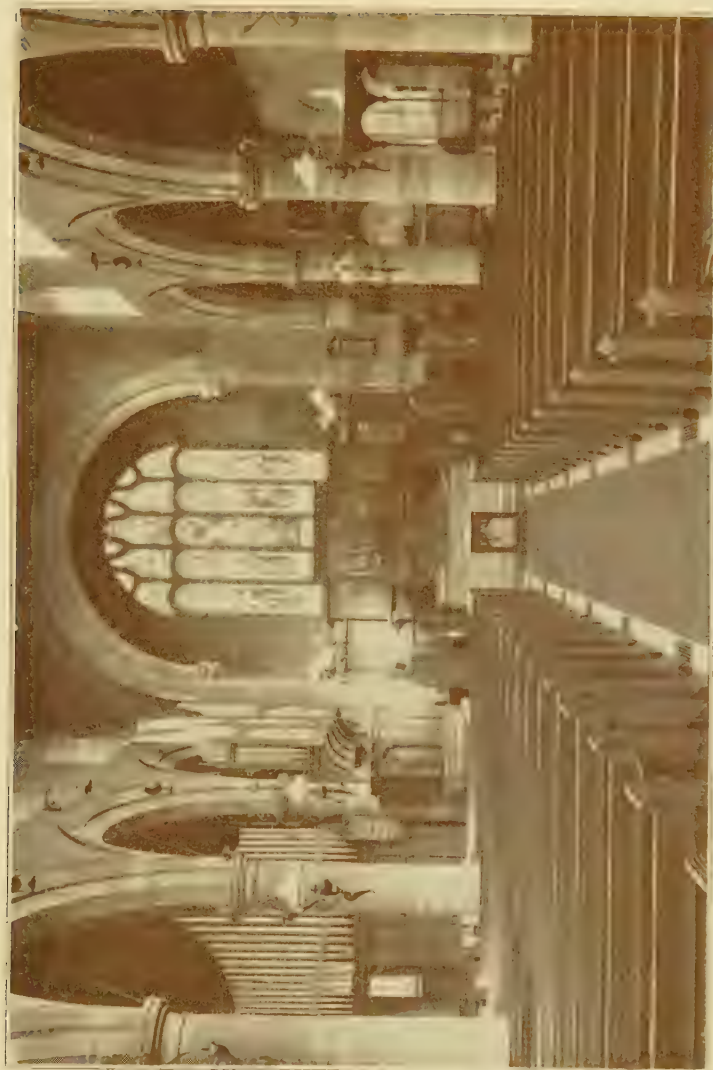
THERE are three volumes of old registers, bound in old calf and vellum respectively, the leaves being of parchment. In Volume III., which is the largest, consisting of 113 leaves, $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, ten leaves in the middle are blank, and some cut away irregularly. Besides containing features common to all records of this description, the parish registers of Newchurch are documents of unusual interest. Here and there are to be found the names of individuals who distinguished themselves in their day and generation—in one instance very much to his everlasting shame. I shall refer later to the person of Thomas Blood, afterwards Colonel Blood, who became notorious for his misdeeds.

ANCIENT TERRITORIAL FAMILIES.

The famous Lieutenant-Colonel of the Parliamentary Army, John Holcroft, and other members of the family resided in the Parish, and the connection with the Parish of one or two other ancient territorial families is most interesting. Gilbert de Culcheth, lord of Culcheth, who died about the year 1246, married Cecily, lady of Laton. His four daughters and co-heiresses—Ellen, Margaret, Joan and Beatrix, were married to the four sons of Hugh de Hindley—Robert, Richard, Thomas and Adam. Robert and Ellen succeeded to the estate of Risley, and bore that name. Richard and Margaret had the Culcheth lands, and were styled de Culcheth. Thomas and Joan obtained the Holcroft part of Gilbert's estate, and took their name from their property, while Adam and Beatrix, who appear to have taken Pesforlong for their share, retained the name of Hindley.

THE RISLEYS AGAIN.

The Risleys continued as landed gentry at Risley until the 18th century, when the family ended with John Risley, who died unmarried in 1702 at the early age of 27 years. He was buried at Winwick Church, where there is an interesting brass tablet to his memory, bearing an inscription over his arms: Quarterly 1st and 4th, an eagle preying upon an infant in swaddling clothes, 2nd and 3rd three antique drinking horns with legs; crest, in a tree, an eagle preying upon an infant in



THE INTERIOR OF THE PRESENT CHURCH.
The Nave, Newchurch-Kenyon Parish Church.



THE WAR MEMORIAL.

erected by the Inhabitants of the Parish, and placed in the Churchyard to the memory of those from the parish who fell in the War, 1914 to 1918.

The beautiful 16th century Sun-Dial is also shown in the picture on the right of the War Memorial.

swaddling clothes; motto: "Fato prudentia major." To the same family belonged the Rev. Thomas Risley, M.A., fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, who, as stated, was compelled to surrender his fellowship on account of Nonconformity, and built Risley Chapel about 1707.

HISTORIC PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL.

The interior of the Chapel—reputed to be the smallest Presbyterian Chapel in the country—has on the side of several of the oak pews the date 1706. In the graveyard in front of the Chapel is a raised flat stone marking the tomb of the said Rev. Thomas Risley, and the following inscription is decipherable: "Here interred the body of the Rev. Thomas Risley, M.A., Oxford. He left the Church of England in 1662, and built Risley Chapel in 1707, where he officiated up to his death. He died in 1716, aged 86 years. 'The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.' " Near by is the grave of his son, and the following inscription appears on the stone: "Rev. John Risley, M.A., born January 29th, 1690, died 3rd September, 1743, aged 53 years; also Hannah, his wife, and Hannah, his daughter."

THE CULCHETHS.

The Culcheths were seated at Culcheth Hall from the 13th century until 1747, when the last male representative of the family, Thomas Culcheth, died without issue, the estate passing to his father's sister, Catherine, who conveyed it to her husband, John Trafford, of Croston. The Culcheths were Roman Catholics, and were allied with many of the old families of the same faith. A branch of the family resided at Abram, near Wigan.

THE HOLCROFTS.

The Holcrofts made a greater mark in history than either the Risleys or the Culcheths, and branches of the family spread from Holcroft to various parts of England. Sir John Holcroft, knighted at the Coronation of Edward VI., was among the "Knightes dubbed by the Kinge on Sunday the day of his coronation, the 20 of February being crowned to the nombre of 40 in lieu of the Bathe wch then could not be perfourmed accordinge to all ceremonyes thereto belonginge the tyme for the pourpose being to shorte." His grand-nephew, Lieutenant-Colonel John Holcroft, of Holcroft, was concerned in the shedding of the first blood in the Civil War. As already stated in the preceding chapter, he bequeathed a gold chain towards the re-building of the nave of the Parish Church of Newchurch, which was destroyed, and again erected in 1753, according to a line in the registers. He also left £80, the interest thereof to be paid to the Curate of Newchurch.

AN UNFORTUNATE MARRIAGE.

Colonel Holcroft's daughter Maria became the wife of Colonel Blood, who subsequently became notorious for his daring and impudent plot to carry off the crown jewels from the Tower of London.

Colonel Holcroft's son, Thomas, died in 1667, and leaving only female issue, the estate went to his brother Charles, who died without issue in 1672, when the property passed to Thomas's daughter Eleanor, wife of Thomas Tyldesley. After the death of Charles Holcroft, his brother-in-law, Colonel Blood, unsuccessfully attempted to obtain possession of the estate.

TWELVE GENERATIONS OF HOLCROFTS.

Twelve generations of Holcrofts succeeded one another at Hurst, an estate in Glazebury. The last owner of Hurst removed to Newton-le-Willows, and was buried at Winwick as "Thomas Holcroft, of Newton, Esq.," on the 19th February, 1707-8. A branch of the family left Hurst and settled at East Ham, in Essex, at the end of the 16th century. One of them, Sir Henry Holcroft, was knighted at Whitehall, 1st May, 1622, and was the father of Sir John Holcroft, of East Ham, whose fifth son, Francis, of Clare Hall, Cambridge, was an itinerant Nonconformist preacher, sometimes called "The Apostle of Cambridge-shire," and suffered imprisonment for nine years in Cambridge Castle; he died in 1693. The Holcrofts, of Balderton, in Nottinghamshire, descended from Sir John Holcroft, of Holcroft, who died in 1560. The Holcrofts, of Basingstoke, Hants, whose first recorded ancestor was William Holcroft, "born in Cheshire," produced a knight in the person of Sir William Holcroft, of Walthamstow, in Essex, who died in 1689.

MORE NOTABLE FAMILIES

CULCHETH HALL IN THE 13th CENTURY

THE WITHINGTONS AND THE MARSHES

THERE are few Parishes in the country so rich in historical association as Newchurch. Brief reference has been made already to Culcheth Hall, built in 1246 and long held by the family of De Culcheths, from whom it passed into the hands of the De Traffords, of Croston, in 1747, when the last male representative of the family, Thomas Culcheth, died without issue. Catherine, his father's sister, conveyed it to her husband, John Trafford, but in less than 30 years the Hall and estate had been purchased by Peter Withington.

CULCHETH HALL.

The only part of the moat which originally surrounded the hall—a feature of most ancient halls—is the old pond adjoining the farm. In the old tithe barn, built in 1676, in the form of a private chapel, so as not to disfigure the hall grounds, tithes were originally paid in kind. No religious services were ever held there, as a private chapel was provided inside the mansion itself. Culcheth Hall is mentioned in Domesday Book, the deeds and ancient documents dating back nearly 700 years. The walls of the old part of the hall are four feet thick.

THE WITHINGTON FAMILY.

The Withingtons became landed gentry at Culcheth in 1824, Peter Withington being an old gentleman when he purchased the Hall from John Trafford, and he died there in 1826, at the age of 78.

The Newchurch Parish Church registers record his burial under the Withington Chapel, together with Ann Ellames, his wife. The estate passed to Thomas Ellames Withington, his son, born in 1803, and who died in 1840. His wife, Ann Griffin, of Liverpool, born in the same year, survived her husband 42 years. Both were interred under the Withington Chapel in the present Parish Church.

During the Chartist riots, or the "Leighth Feight," as it was termed, the said Thomas Ellames Withington, Squire of Culcheth, took 50 able-bodied Culcheth men, armed with pikes, and read the Riot Act in Leigh Market Place.

A FAMILIAR NAME.

Thomas Ellames Withington, son of the above, born at Culcheth Hall in 1831, became the new Squire at the age of nine years, and married in 1857 Cecilia, eldest daughter of the Rev. Edward Cardwell, D.D., of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford. She died in 1875, leaving three sons and one daughter. Three years later the Squire of Culcheth married as his second wife, Ann Margaret, eldest daughter of the late Octavius William Temple, Governor of Sierra Leone, and niece of the late Archbishop of Canterbury. He died a year after the Great War broke out and is buried in the family vault in the Parish Churchyard, as is also his widow, who died a year later. Arthur Withington, their third son, born in 1866, died in 1923, and is buried at Helsby Parish Church. His daughter Cecilia, who takes a deep interest in the work of the parish, lives at Helsby, and is a generous benefactress of the Parish Church of Newchurch, where her father and forebears worshipped so long.

THE LAST RESIDENT SQUIRE.

The last resident Squire of Culcheth was Thomas Ellames Withington, a justice of the peace. Succeeding his father of the same Christian names, Thomas Ellames Withington is a M.A. of Oxon, and married Jane Florentia Golding, and resides at St. Leonards-on-Sea, the hall being then sold, and the estate broken up. He conveyed the existing portion of the old estate to Captain Thomas Ellames Withington, his son, who won the Royal Air Force Cross, and is an officer in his Majesty's Army, and stationed in the Isle of Wight. He is, of course, the present Squire of Culcheth. The family motto and crest is " Sapere Aude "—" Dare to be wise."

ANOTHER OUTSTANDING FAMILY.

The name of Marsh has been a household word for more than a generation, and Miss Marsh, who is the sole survivor of a most beneficent family, to whom the parish owes more than can be expressed in words, has well sustained the charitable trait which was dominant in her parents and four brothers, since coming to reside at High Peak in the Newchurch Parish in 1891. Her father, Mr. Richard Marsh, was born at Westleigh Hall in 1814, the son of Mr. Richard Nicholas Marsh, a justice of the peace and prosperous cotton spinner. Her father held various public positions with distinction, and was a prominent Church worker. His wife was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Topping, Vicar of Leigh from 1826 to 1839, and a stained-glass window to her memory exists at the south-east end of the Parish Church. His sons, William Edward, Richard Thomas, Reginald and Arthur, have likewise revered memories, because of their munificence.

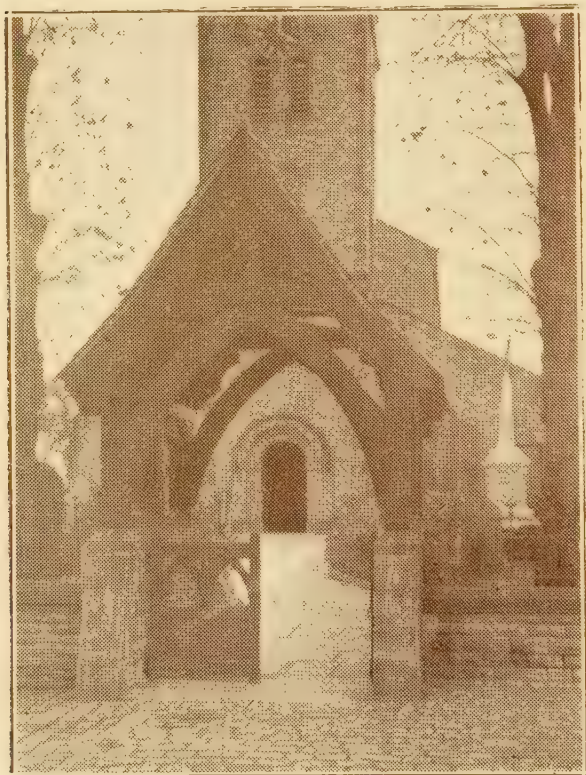


THE LADY CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL.

Liverpool Cathedral is already a place of pilgrimage. It is the embodiment of the idealism that dominates the life of the city. Set upon a hill, it is the returning sailor's first glimpse of home, and Liverpool's last salute to the outward bound ship. It is hundreds of years since such a beautiful building was imagined. Sir Giles Scott was a youth of 21 when he was inspired to design it. The Cathedral is only partly complete. You have therefore an opportunity of seeing a Cathedral in the making, and of taking some part in helping it towards a triumphant completion. Near the Cathedral is Rodney Street, where stands the house (No. 62) in which William Ewart Gladstone was born.



THE RECTORY, NEWCHURCH. Erected 1812.
Completely restored by the present Rector in 1925.



THE LYCH-GATE and CHURCH TOWER AND CLOCK.
Newchurch-Kenyon Parish Church.

A FAIRY GODMOTHER.

Richard Thomas Marsh, who was included in the first list of borough magistrates in 1903, was also a county magistrate, and shortly before the war he made a handsome gift of £10,000 to the Town Council for the erection of new swimming baths, supplemented later by a further gift of £5,000 by Miss Marsh to enable the baths to be built in accordance with her late brother's wishes. Miss Marsh is regarded as a fairy godmother in the Parish of Newchurch, and she continues quietly and unobtrusively the good work to which she has been accustomed for a lifetime. She is a most liberal supporter of the Parish Church of Newchurch-Kenyon, the parish in which she resides.

ROMANTIC STORY OF COLONEL BLOOD

THE MAN WHO STOLE THE KING'S CROWN

EXTRAORDINARY CAREER OF DARING

HIS CONNECTION WITH NEWCHURCH

IT is not with any feelings of pride " swelling within the human breast " that the name of Colonel Blood is mentioned by any of the parishioners of Newchurch. As already stated, he became a notorious character, an outstanding incident in a life of daring adventure being a series of wicked exploits, which, as Lord Birkenhead has well described in his book on " Famous Trials of History," made him famous before he set the seal on his consummate audacity by depriving the King of his Crown in 1671.



THE NOTORIOUS COLONEL BLOOD.

A TRULY REMARKABLE FIGURE.

An entry appears in the Newchurch Parish Registers under date 1650 of the name of Thomas Blood who, on June 21st of that year, married Maria, daughter of John Holcroft, of Holcroft, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army of the Parliament, and who, as already stated, bequeathed a gold chain towards the rebuilding of the nave of the original ancient Church, and left £80, the interest thereof to be paid to



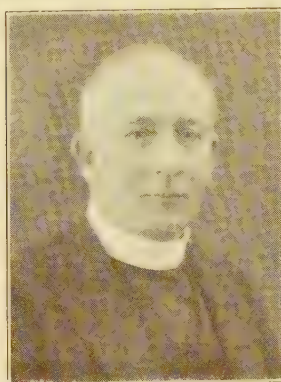
Ven. Archdeacon HOWSON, M.A.,
Canon Residentiary, Liverpool
Cathedral, Archdeacon of War-
rington.



Rev. F. W. DWELLY, M.A.,
Canon Residentiary and Cere-
moniarius of Liverpool Cathedral.



Rev. FRANK STONE, M.A.,
Vicar of St. Peter's, Newton-
le-Willows, and Rural Dean
of Winwick.



Rev. C. W. BUDDEN, M.A., M.D.,
Bishop's Messenger for Lay
Service, and Editor of the
"Liverpool Review."



CULCHETH HALL.

The home of the late Squire, Capt. T. E. Withington, J.P.



CULCHETH HALL CARRIAGE DRIVE,

with view of the Hall in the distance.

the Curate of Newchurch. Blood attained the rank of Colonel in the same Army as his father-in-law, and it would have been a blessing to the parish never to have known such an adventurous and utterly unscrupulous character. He was that type of man who might have been extremely useful in his day and generation if his energies had been directed in a proper channel.

ATTEMPT TO SEIZE DUBLIN CASTLE.

Colonel Thomas Blood is believed to have first seen the light of day in Ireland—his father being a prosperous blacksmith and afterwards an iron founder there—where, after having been deprived of his estates, he determined out of revenge, in 1663, to seize Dublin Castle and his enemy, the Duke of Ormonde, then Lord-Lieutenant, but his wicked design was frustrated. His villainy, however, knew no bounds, and he resorted to all kinds of vile strategy to accomplish the unlawful purposes to which he appeared to have set himself. It is recorded that many were arrested and afterwards tried, convicted and executed. Blood had received warning and got away. He did not go far. His brother-in-law had been seized and Blood's first thought was to rescue him. He made the attempt and nearly succeeded. After this failure he lurked about in secret places in Ireland, sheltering among the disaffected, but at last the pursuit became too close and he departed for Holland, and it is believed while there, in order to save his skin, he came to an understanding with the Government and purchased immunity by becoming a spy and thereby escaping the penalty of dabbling in treason. He later served with the Covenanters in Scotland, returning to England after the Battle of Pentland Hills on November 27th, 1666, pursued by the royal officers who chased him, first into his native country and then back to England.

A DARING OUTRAGE.

Blood's second attempt to lay hold of the Duke of Ormonde was characterised with equal daring to his first in Dublin, this time in London. William, Prince of Orange, visited England in November, 1670, and there were great rejoicings in the Metropolis. James, Duke of Ormonde, the King's representative in Ireland, naturally was among the guests. The spirit of revenge was still harboured by Colonel Blood who, with five others, stopped the coach in which the Duke was driving from St. James' Palace in the street of that name. The villain of the piece had at this time assumed the name of Ayliffe, and posed as a physician as an aid to disguise his identity and assist in his unlawful designs. Blood and his confederates dragged the Duke from his coach, bound him and mounted him behind one of the party, who began to

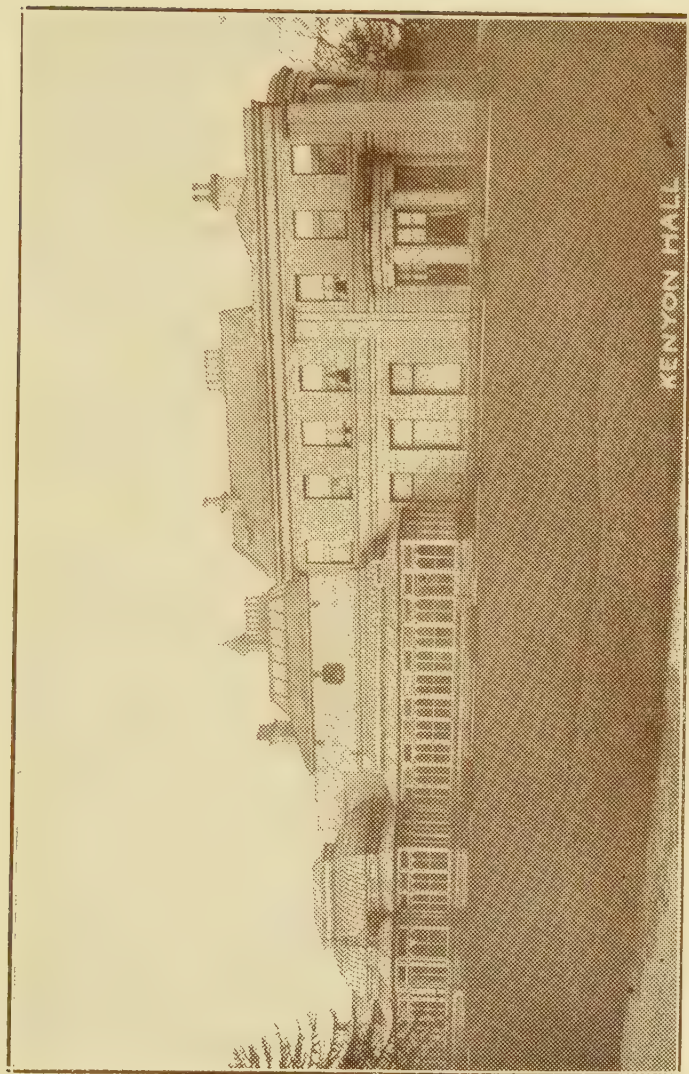
gallop off to Tyburn, there, it is presumed, to hang him, Blood having, it is said, prepared the gallows. The Duke, however, regained his liberty after a desperate struggle, in which his coachman played a successful part. Blood and his confederates managed to escape arrest.

ATTEMPT TO ROB THE KING.

Foiled in his base ambitions, Blood makes another desperate throw after a comparatively short interval—this time to hold the King up to ransom by the theft of his treasure. The Crown jewels were kept at the Tower of London, in charge of an aged man named Edwards, who guarded them in a strong room at his official residence there. He was in the habit of occasionally showing the Royal treasure to the public, the Tower having been a place of great interest throughout the centuries. Accompanied by friends, Blood, disguised on this occasion as a parson, prevailed upon the custodian to allow his friends to see the Royal regalia at an early hour, he unsuspectingly yielding to their seemingly modest request. Finding the keeper to be without assistance, Blood and his confederates belaboured him, and leaving him as they thought dead, they seized upon the valuable booty and made off. They succeeded in crossing the moat, but were then overtaken, an alarm having been unexpectedly raised, and were thrown into prison in the White Tower.

SAVED BY HIS AUDACITY.

Blood's trial before Charles II at Whitehall is more like a chapter of romance than an actual page of real life. Blood's audacity undoubtedly saved him from the gallows. On being brought before the King, his veiled threats produced such an effect upon his Majesty that he not only granted Colonel Blood a free pardon, but also an estate in Ireland and an annual pension of £500. This was in 1678. Eventually, it is recorded, Colonel Blood became a Court favourite and resided at Westminster, where he died August 24th, 1680.



KENYON HALL, KENYON.



The Rose Queen of 1926, Miss Elsie Barrow, her Lady-in-Waiting and Maids of Honour.

The Festival was held in the Rectory Grounds, June, 1926.



The Rose Queen of 1927, Miss Martha Wareing, her Lady-in-Waiting, Maids of Honour and Pages.

The Festival was held in the Rectory Grounds, June, 1927.

COLONEL HOLCROFT OF HOLCROFT HALL
THE MARRIAGE OF HIS DAUGHTER TO COLONEL
BLOOD
COLONEL HOLCROFT'S OBJECTIONS DISREGARDED
AN UNPOPULAR MATCH
FROM LIEUTENANT TO COLONEL UNDER CROMWELL

AS already stated, Thomas Blood was the son of an Irish blacksmith who became a wealthy ironmaster during the reign of Charles I, and was an ardent Protestant. He spent his fortune during the Civil War on the cause and ended his days fighting with the Parliamentary forces, in which his son received a commission as lieutenant at 16 years of age, under Fairfax. Father and son fought side by side in many engagements, and after death had removed the elder Blood in 1645, "the dashing lieutenant" joined Cromwell's forces, marching north to meet the Duke of Hamilton's army in Lancashire. He was present at the defeat of the Scottish forces at Preston, when Cromwell, with Lambert, routed the Scottish troops and virtually ended the Civil War.

THE ROMANCE OF NEWCHURCH.

The romance of Newchurch commenced shortly afterwards, when he met Thomas Holcroft, a young man about the same age, and was introduced to Colonel John Holcroft, his father, at the family seat, Holcroft Hall. Colonel Holcroft, who has been described as "a fine old English gentleman," had one son and three daughters—Maria, Isabella and Rachael. The gay lieutenant, with his innate gift of Irish wit and persuasiveness, ingratiated himself in the affections of Maria, the eldest daughter, to whom Thomas Risley, founder of the Presbyterian Chapel—said to be the smallest Presbyterian place of worship in the country—at Risley, was paying attentions.

MEETING WITH HIS FATHER-IN-LAW-TO-BE.

Colonel John Holcroft, it might be interposed, though loving the country life which the estate bearing his name afforded, could not help joining the forces against the Royalists, together with the neighbouring gentlemen of the county. He had been M.P. for Liverpool in the short Parliament which sat from April 13th to May 5th, 1640. Three years later he raised, with Stanley, Egerton and Holland, a troop and fought the cause of Parliament for some years in and around Wigan and

Warrington. He was present at the attack on Winwick Hall and Church. He became Mayor of Liverpool in 1644, and in 1645, until 1648 was M.P. for Wigan, and was ejected under Pride's Purge. At this time he was parading and keeping the peace between Warrington and Culcheth and the surrounding districts of Lowton, Golborne, Ashton, as far as Wigan, and so fell in with Lieutenant Blood as Cromwell's forces were pursuing the Scotch troops—little dreaming at the time that he was making the acquaintance of his future notorious son-in-law. Only once has a King of England perished on the scaffold, and Colonel John Holcroft, of Holcroft Hall, was always proud of the fact that he was opposed to the execution of King Charles I.

MARIA HOLCROFT CAPTIVATED.

Maria Holcroft, the Colonel's eldest daughter, tall and fair, with soft, blue eyes and a pleasant face, though too masculine to be really pretty, was captivated by her soldier wooer. She was 20 years of age, which was two or three years older than engagements were usually arranged in those days. "The dashing young lieutenant" was not her father's fancy. He was much too plausible for the Colonel, and the thought of Maria's attachment to him was a source of trouble and anxiety. It is said that the disconsolate father longed for some unforeseen event to take the lieutenant away from Holcroft. His wish was partially gratified, as Blood was hastily summoned to follow Cromwell from Warrington to Stonyhurst. Maria, however, eagerly awaited the return of her lover, much to the discomfiture of her father, who remarked "I am sorry the troopers ever came to Holcroft."

A COUSIN BREAKS THE NEWS.

The news of his return with several troopers was heralded by Thomas Risley, a cousin of Maria, who had hoped for her hand and heart, and had declared that when he became a goodly rector he would wed Maria. "They are on their way from Winwick, where Cromwell is resting his troops." Maria busied herself in making preparations for their reception, and they arrived within an hour of the news, accompanied by Thomas, Maria's brother, who had met them on the way. Maria's eyes caught the young lieutenant's as he came into the hall, and, giving him a welcome smile, she said, "Thou art welcome, Master Blood. We are glad to greet thee after thy hard riding. I am glad that thy bones were not broken or that thy body was not left on the battle field." The party of troopers remained at the hall three days, and each day Maria's love grew stronger as nightly she listened to his voice, which sang and spoke of love. When the time came to say "Good-bye," Maria had thrown her father's warning aside, and completely losing her head, gave her heart to the young lieutenant.



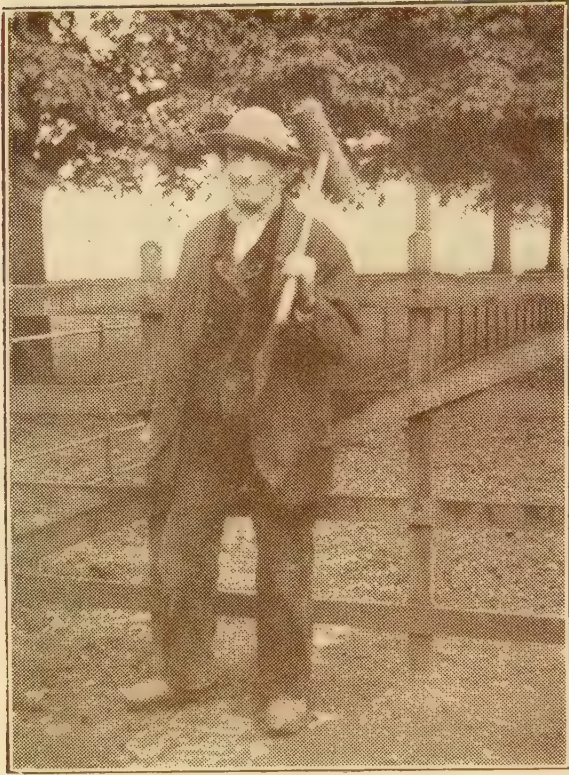
LEIGH HALL, KENYON.

The home of Miss Leigh, Miss F. Leigh and Miss E. Leigh, generous benefactors to the Church and Parish.



SPRINGFIELD, CULCHETH.

The home of Dr. R. B. Sephton, J.P., and Miss Sephton, generous benefactors to the Church and Parish.



The late **WILLIAM KIRKHAM**,

the last survivor of the 50 able-bodied Culcheth men who accompanied the Squire of Culcheth, Thomas Ellames Withington, Esq., on August 14th, 1839, to Leigh, when the Squire of Culcheth read the Riot Act in the Market Place, Leigh, during the Chartist riots, or the "Leighth Feight" as it was termed. Mr. William Kirkham is buried in the Churchyard at Newchurch.

PROMOTION TO COLONEL.

Lieutenant Blood, ordered with Cromwell's forces to Ireland in 1649, took part in the siege of Drogheda, saw Kilkenny taken, the county of Tipperary devastated, and the capture of Clonmel—the last feat of arms for Cromwell in Ireland. On May 26th, 1650, Cromwell sailed for Bristol, and on June 1st he received a hearty welcome on Hounslow Heath, and a grant of land and a house, opposite Whitehall, given him for his residence. Blood, with the title of Colonel, crossed over to England with him, and was not long in renewing his attentions to Maria Holcroft at Holcroft Hall. The news of his service with his chief were recounted, and Colonel Holcroft is said to have joined in the congratulations extended to him by his daughter on his achievements and promotion more out of courtesy than as a mark of increasing favour.

WOODED AND WON AT HOLCROFT HALL.

“Right glad I am to be left here to keep the peace in Culcheth,” said Colonel Holcroft. “Thou hast a quiet and peaceful heart,” rejoined Colonel Blood. Though reckless as a trooper, it is recorded that Blood was an honourable lover. He wooed and won Maria Holcroft in all good faith, and on the 21st of June, 1650, the ancient Parish Church of Newchurch was the scene of one of the most remarkable and notorious weddings on record.

THE RECORD OF THE MARRIAGE.

“Thomas Bloud gens at Maria Holcroft matrimonio copulati vicessimio primo die Junni anno Domi 1650 ” is the record of the event in the Newchurch parish registers. There was a sadness in the loneliness of the wedding, as though it were destined to be ill-fated. What might have been a scene of brilliancy and gaiety, and a gathering together of the county families of South-West Lancashire was turned into a solemn and dismal scene of six, standing before the altar. Colonel Holcroft, father of the bride, absolutely refused to witness it. William Leigh, the Curate at Newchurch, was the officiating minister, and was included in the small gathering at the wedding feast at Holcroft Hall. The only stranger, or representative of the county families, was Eleanor Birch, of Birch, a lifelong friend of Maria's, who, with Thomas Holcroft (brother), and his two sisters, were the only witnesses of that eventful and fateful marriage. Thomas Holcroft and Eleanor Birch were united in matrimony some two years afterwards, at Newchurch.

AN UNPOPULAR UNION.

Maria Holcroft's wedding to Colonel Blood was, by every one except herself, considered to be unfortunate and unwise. Though Thomas Holcroft, her brother, had given his sister to the care and keeping of this soldier harum-scarum, yet, the fact of knowing that on all sides the union was unacceptable, made him regret somewhat his light-heartedness, and his ready willingness in bringing about this speedy and romantic marriage. Colonel Blood soon afterwards left Culcheth for Ireland. His absence extended over two years, a son being born in the meantime, and it was not until the wedding of Thomas Holcroft and Eleanor Birch that Colonel Blood set eyes upon his first born on visiting Holcroft again.

NARRATIVE OF THE TRAGEDY OF CULCHETH PISTOL DUEL FOR AN ESTATE KING CHARLES OFFERS REWARD OF £1,000 FOR BLOOD'S ARREST

THE wedding of Thomas Holcroft and Eleanor Birch, daughter of Colonel Birch, who also served in the Parliamentary forces like Colonel John Holcroft, the respective parents, was a most brilliant function by contrast with that of his sister Maria and Colonel Blood, two years previously. There was a large gathering of surrounding gentry and Colonel Blood was one of the most honoured guests, the attitude towards him having undergone a great change. He was soon afterwards summoned back to Ireland, and on this occasion he took his wife and infant son, and thus began the complete transformation which the Newchurch Squire's eldest daughter was destined to experience in her quiet country life.

COLONEL BLOOD DISMISSED THE ARMY.

Oliver Cromwell assumed the Protectorate in 1653, and his son Henry, after serving as Major-General, succeeded Fleetwood as his father's deputy within two years. Colonel Blood was made a commissioner of Parliament, and entrusted with the work of capturing outlaws. By virtue of his position as a magistrate he held courts-martial and carried out executions. A great change came over the scene in the course of the next few years. After the death of Cromwell in 1658, his son Henry's position became insecure, and within two years



"DOLLY," the beautiful horse that draws the Rose Queen on her triumphal journey through the village.

Mr. Jack Tildsley is in charge, and the horse belongs to Roger Grimshaw, Esq., of Culcheth Hall Farm.



A Happy Group of Village Children taking part in the Annual Village Carnival, at the Rectory, June, 1927.

The Earl of Stamford and Patrons of our Annual Rose
Queen Festival and Village Carnival.



The Right Honble. the
EARL OF STAMFORD.



The Right Honble.
THE LORD DARESBURY, C.V.O.



Sir GEORGE HOLDEN, Bt.



Sir EDWIN STOCKTON.

Colonel Blood had declined to serve under the Duke of Ormonde, who was again appointed Lord-Lieutenant under Charles II., who was proclaimed King in 1660, and made his public entry into London on his birthday. With the Act of Settlement came the crisis in Colonel Blood's career. He was deprived of his estate and dismissed from the Army, and thereafter became the wandering fortune hunter, outlaw and fearless desperado that brought such uneviable notoriety to the Lancashire village of Newchurch.

RETURN TO HOLCROFT HALL.

Colonel Blood and his wife left Ireland to renew acquaintance with the scene of their romantic courtship, bringing with them two children—the elder a son born at Holcroft Hall, and a daughter, born in Ireland. More pleasant memories would be revived in meeting her brother Thomas and his wife, and new joy experienced in making friends with their three children. Maria had plenty of opportunity for reflection after her husband's return to Dublin—this time to head an insurrection against the Duke of Ormonde and carry out a deep-laid plot to capture Dublin Castle.

"A PIOUS COVENANTER."

For this evil scheme Colonel Blood posed as a pious Covenanter, laying his plans no longer as a soldier but as a civilian. A contingent of about 100 strong remained outside Dublin Castle while six selected civilians entered on the pretext of presenting a petition to the Lord Lieutenant. The guards were to be deceived by a feigned accident to a pretended baker, who stumbled while carrying a large basket, and shammed to be hurt. It was designed that the accident would engage the attention of the guards and be the signal for the force outside to enter the castle. The plot failed, and Blood was fortunate to escape arrest. Seven Members of Parliament were among those who suffered that fate, and Blood's brother-in-law, Leckie, was one of those condemned to death.

A ROAMER AND AN OUTLAW.

Colonel Blood eluded his pursuers by hiding among the disaffected and roaming in the mountains, fleeing to Holland, thence to Scotland, afterwards going to London, where he stayed awhile, returning to Ireland, it was believed, to avenge the execution of his brother-in-law, but he found the Earl of Dungannon more than a match for him, and he was hunted out of that country again. The ravages of the Black Plague and the Great Fire had cleansed London of many black spots when Colonel Blood settled there again with the spirit of intrigue and adventure still uppermost.

AN APOTHECARY IN ROMFORD.

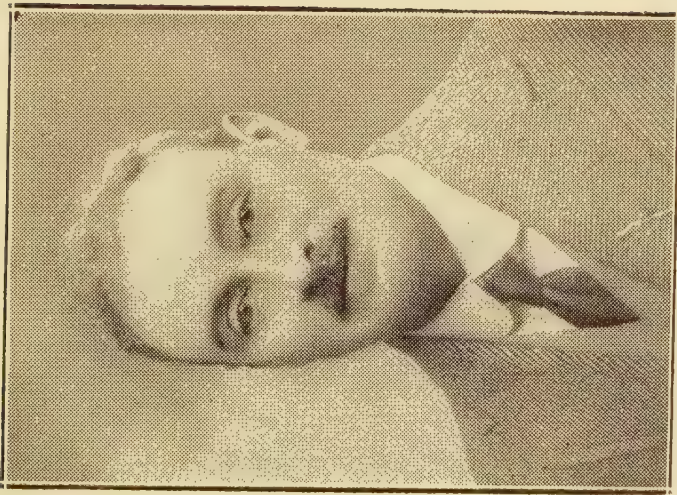
He became an apothecary and took up his abode in Romford, where he was joined by his wife and son and daughter, who were probably unaware that they were joining the leader of a revolutionary party which met in defiance of Parliament and was composed of every conceivable fanatic. The plot on General Monk and the Tower of London was frustrated through treachery, and Colonel Blood, to their surprise, pardoned the ringleaders. His rescue of Captain Mason, one of the conspirators, who after a long detention in prison was sent North in charge of a guard of eight soldiers to await his trial at Durham Assizes, is reminiscent of the most alarming episodes of Dick Turpin or Robin Hood. He followed with three chosen confederates on horseback and with pistols, and overtook them after several days' journey. He stayed at the same inn one night during the journey and made the acquaintance of several of the guards, whom he regaled with liquor before riding on to overtake the two guards in charge of Captain Mason. A pistol duel ensued and Captain Mason was released. Blood was badly mauled in the encounter, but he and his confederates, now joined by Captain Mason, eluded arrest by hiding in Sherwood Forest.

DUTCH ATTACK ON LONDON.

Blood and Mason, it is believed, were mainly instrumental in the Dutch attack upon London. They joined the Dutch Navy, and sailed up the Thames and afterwards into the Medway, burning the dockyard, and all the shipping they could find in Chatham. Peace, however, was made, and the Triple Alliance agreed upon at Breda in July, 1667. In August of that year Thomas Holcroft, who had succeeded his father as the Squire of Culcheth, died, and Colonel Blood came once more into the neighbourhood of Holcroft. His wife and son and daughter had returned from London to Holcroft Hall some time previously, but Blood dare not now accept hospitality under that roof for fear of capture. He was a much-wanted outlaw.

TRAGEDY AT HOLCROFT.

The tragedy of Holcroft, which one has heard mentioned with bated breath on occasions, came about in this way. Thomas Holcroft having died without surviving male issue, a dispute arose about the Holcroft estate. A Richard Cavelvely put forth a claim to part of the estate, which had already been over-ruled in the law courts, and visited the house of Hamlet Holcroft, a younger brother of Colonel Holcroft, and demanded possession. A long dispute ended in Hamlet Holcroft being shot dead, and Richard Cavelvely rightly or wrongly, coming into possession of the land. But of the main estate there were two claimants—Colonel Blood on behalf of his wife, and Charles Holcroft, a younger brother, who succeeded, and Blood's claim was defeated.



The late Mr. ARTHUR WITHINGTON.

Died November, 1923.



Capt. T. E. WITHINGTON, A.F.C.,

The present Squire of Culcheth.



The Rev. W. FAUSSETT BLACK, D.D.,
Rector of Newchurch-Kenyon, 1884 to 1897.
Resigned the Benefice May 1st, 1897.



The Rev. E. W. WHITTENBURY KAYE,
Rector of Newchurch-Kenyon from 1897 to 1925.
Resigned the Benefice February 1st, 1925.

ATTACK ON THE DUKE OF ORMONDE.

Colonel Blood once more returned to London and practised as a physician under the name of Ayliffe, and entered into the secret service of the Duke of Buckingham, a man of no better principle than himself. Blood assumed many disguises, and plotted to avenge himself on the Duke of Ormonde, his own son, Thomas, who was 19 years of age, being drawn into the wicked scheme. The Duke resided at Clarendon House, opposite St. James's Palace, and it was while returning from a Royal Banquet to the honour of the Prince of Orange that his coach was held up by Colonel Blood, his son and two other accomplices, and the Duke dragged out. The outrage happened on December 6th, 1670. The Duke was unaccompanied by his usual bodyguard, who had been persuaded by Colonel Blood to a neighbouring inn, where they imbibed too freely and unsuspectingly. The Duke was dragged mercilessly from the coach by Colonel Blood and his son, the Colonel exclaiming "to the gallows thou shalt go," unheeding the Duke's appeals for mercy. He was hitched to one of the other accomplices on a steed and rushed towards Tyburn, where arrangements had been made for his execution. As a result, however, of the Duke's continued struggling the riders fell from the horse and the Duke escaped. A proclamation was issued by King Charles II, and a reward of £1,000 offered for the capture of Colonel Blood, who, however, again eluded arrest.

ROMANCE OF THE 17th CENTURY

COLONEL BLOOD'S PLOT TO STEAL CROWN JEWELS

DISGUISES AS A CLERGYMAN

SENSATIONAL RESULT OF TRIAL BEFORE THE KING

COLONEL BLOOD'S attempt, or attempts, to steal the Crown jewels—for he had made two daring essays—constitute a page of the most thrilling romance that was ever penned, and could only have been conceived by the most clever and daring outlaw. It was not until 1670 that the public were permitted to inspect the Royal jewels in the Tower of London—a slight charge being made principally as a means of augmenting the small salary of the keeper of the Tower. Sir Gilbert Talbot appointed a Mr. Edwards as keeper under him, and he, with his family, resided at the Tower. Colonel Blood first made the acquaint-

ance of Mr. Edwards and his wife when posing as a clergyman, accompanied by his wife. According to plan, she was to faint and fall during the process of inspection of the Crown jewels, the assumption being that Edwards would go to her assistance, and the King's Crown and other valuables could be "lifted" during the ruse.

A PLOT THAT FAILED.

The audacious plot, however, failed, and suiting himself to the occasion, the clergyman—Colonel Blood in disguise—and his wife thanked Mr. and Mrs. Edwards for their hospitality, he after first safely locking up the jewels, having invited them to rest a little in their house while the visitor's wife fully "recovered" from her pretended illness. What a pose, to be sure, for a daughter of the former Squire of Culcheth, and for a Holcroft! A thousand pities Maria Holcroft ever came in contact with such a scoundrel. Colonel Blood used the friendship thus formed with Mr. and Mrs. Edwards to suit his crafty and ill-conceived ends of future plunder.

INTRODUCES HIS SON AS RICH NEPHEW.

Accordingly, he made special and frequent calls at all times at the keeper's house, often carrying presents, and thus making himself a welcome visitor. He was eventually accompanied by his son, styling him as his nephew, and introducing him to the keeper and his wife "as a young gentleman of fortune," who would make a desirable husband for their daughter. Mrs. Edwards became fascinated with the prospects of such a nice young gentleman with an assured income of £300 a year as her future son-in-law, and Colonel Blood's visits were thus unsuspectingly encouraged. The wily Colonel had thoroughly deceived the Tower keeper and his wife, and paved the way, as he considered, to a more successful raid on the valuable Crown jewels.

THE NEXT PLOT.

A young man named Hunt, said to belong to Culcheth, who had married the only daughter of Colonel Blood, as well as the son of the cunning ex-officer, and another man named Parrot, who had fought with Colonel Harrison at Warrington, made up the party of plotters to rob the King of his crown and jewels. They arrived at the Tower on a day appointed with the object of introducing his "nephew" to Miss Edwards. The mother and her daughter were not quite ready to receive them, and Colonel Blood, the clever schemer that he was, suggested that Mr. Edwards might show him and his companions the King's regalia while his "nephew" waited to make the acquaintance of his fair daughter. The suggestion was acted upon, and no sooner had Edwards entered the jewel house than the door was quickly closed and a cloak thrown over him, and while thus gagged the daring scoundrel



Capt. CECIL S. RAMSDEN.
The Architect of our present beautiful Church.
Erected 1903. Completed 1904.



The late **Mr. W. T. THORNLEY.**
Headmaster of the Senior Church of England
Day School for 23 years—1904 to 1927.
Died Tuesday, September 20th, 1927.



The late Dr. RICHARD SEPHTON.

Born 1834—Died 1915.

A good Churchman, a great friend, generous and considerate, a typical country doctor with a genial smile and nod for everyone. Patient and optimistic. Very much loved and very much missed. A beautiful stained-glass window, representing "Christ, the Good Physician," was erected in Church to his memory.

The Family Vault where they rest is in the Churchyard.



The late Mrs. RICHARD SEPHTON.

Born 1847—Died 1926.

A great worker and helper when the old Church was destroyed by fire. Enlisted the sympathy of all her friends in the building of our present Church and contributed largely in many ways herself. Kind, tactful, loyal and true. She lived much loved and died lamented. The brass branch-candlesticks on the altar were presented by Mrs. Sephton in 1923, together with many other gifts.

proceeded to take the jewels. Hunt, his son-in-law, held him down and stunned him with a blow from a mallet to silence him. It is said the sceptre was too large to carry away without suspicion, and an attempt was made to file it into two parts.

"TREASON, MURDER, ROBBERY."

Blood, the younger, was still at the house engaging the attention of Mrs. and Miss Edwards when two strangers unexpectedly appeared on the scene—a son of the Tower keeper and a brother-in-law. Inquiring for Mr. Edwards, they made their way to the jewel house and were greeted with the hue and cry "Treason, murder, robbery," Hunt having seriously wounded the Tower keeper by a dagger stab in the breast. The plunderers escaped, leaving the sceptre behind, but carrying off the crown, the orb and some precious stones. Pursuit was given, and the cry raised "Stop the rogues, treason," in which the culprits joined as a pretext for throwing off suspicion and putting their would-be captors off the scent. Colonel Blood, having fired his last shot, was eventually secured after a desperate struggle, being encumbered with the crown, which he was carrying under his cloak. Parrot, too, was captured, but the younger Blood and Hunt got scot free. Parrot had been carrying the orb, and his breeches pockets were full of precious stones from the sceptre, many of which fell to the ground during the struggle. The great pearl and a large diamond were found and restored, and the Ballas ruby, a stone of great value, was discovered secreted in his trousers after the pair of rascals had been incarcerated in the White Tower awaiting their fate.

STRANGEST TRIAL IN HISTORY.

In due course followed one of the strangest trials in history, with a most remarkable and sensational ending. Colonel Blood had a friend at Court in the Duke of Buckingham, whom he had assisted in the disguises of a courtier, a boatman and an innkeeper, in carrying out many infamous plots and designs of that great Minister and attendant of his Majesty, Charles II. The King, on being informed of the terrible outrage, commanded that the notorious Blood be brought to Whitehall and examined by himself. The Dukes of Buckingham, Arlington, Ormonde and others of the Court sat with the King. Colonel Blood never flinched, and entered upon an harangue, which obviously had the desired effect. It was a case of familiarity breeding contempt. Colonel Blood is said to have fearlessly declined to divulge the names of his accomplices, saying he would hang first. He confessed to the King that he it was who made the attack on the Duke of Ormonde in St. James' Street, and said he had intended to hang his Grace at Tyburn, because "he dismissed me from the Army, confiscated my property and brought me to poverty."

" A BOLD, IMPUDENT FELLOW."

" Thou art a bold, impudent fellow, and thy speech is insolent," answered the King, but Blood undauntingly declared that he had twice stayed his hand from taking his Majesty's life, and if he were not pardoned his life would be in grave danger from a hundred compatriots in the City, who had sworn to avenge his death if that should be his fate.

" Take the fellow away," ordered King Charles, and he and his accomplices were once more lodged in the White Tower to be pardoned later, a letter conveyed by special messenger informing Blood that his estate in Ireland would be restored, and he would be granted £500 a year pension for the loss he had suffered. Rewards from the Exchequer were made to Edwards, the under Tower keeper, of £200, and £100 to his son."

COLONEL BLOOD'S SECOND CLAIM TO HOLCROFT ESTATE CONVICTION ON FALSE CHARGE PROVES FATAL BODY EXHUMED FOR PUBLIC SATISFACTION END OF SENSATIONAL CAREER

BORN in Ireland in 1630, and joining Cromwell's forces at the age of 19 years as a lieutenant, Colonel Blood was married the same year as his promotion at Newchurch Parish Church in 1650. His life was chock-full of daring adventure and sensationalism—there are no film stories to-day to equal so romantic a career as that of the son-in-law of the former Squire of Culcheth. The contrast in the married life of Maria Holcroft as the wife of such a notorious desperado, from the comparative serenity and quietude of Holcroft Hall may be better imagined than described. No wonder after such a career of daring and make-believe, Colonel Blood died a comparatively young man in his 51st year. John Evelyn, in his diary of the period in which the notorious Colonel roamed the British Isles, says " the man had not only a daring but a villainous, unmerciful look, a false countenance, but very well spoken and dangerously insinuating."

ANOTHER BID FOR THE HOLCROFT ESTATE.

Settling down at Westminster, after his trial and sensational pardon and pension by King Charles II, Colonel Blood, it is recorded, became a "man of society," and moved in high circles. He put forward a claim for the Holcroft Estate on the death of Charles Holcroft in 1672. Charles Holcroft had succeeded his brother Thomas, and his right was challenged by his brother-in-law (Colonel Blood) at the time, but failed, and Richard Cavelvely came into a smaller portion after the fatal pistol duel with Hamlet Holcroft, a younger brother of Colonel John Holcroft, already referred to in the last chapter. Colonel Blood went the length of petitioning the King, whom he had frightened into granting him his pardon, less than two years previously, in his second bid for the Holcroft estate. He stated in his petition that the estate had been in the possession of the Holcrofts "above 500 years," that Richard Cavelvely had come into wrongful possession of a portion of it "by killing one Hamlet Holcroft dead with a pistol," and had later killed one of the Sheriff's bailiffs with a rapier.

DOOMED TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

Colonel Blood's petition was dismissed, and the estate passed from the Holcrofts into the family of Sir Thomas Tyldesley, a grandson of Sir Thomas Tyldesley, who had married Eleanor, a daughter of Thomas Holcroft, and niece of Colonel Blood through his wife, Maria Holcroft. Apparently unable to live the quiet life of an ordinary civilian for the rest of his days with his pension, Colonel Blood again became mixed up in the intrigue and treachery which continued in high circles. National affairs were very unsettled, and among other distinguished personages who were incarcerated in the Tower for several months were Lords Shaftesbury, Salisbury, Wharton and Buckingham, to whom Blood always retained a staunch alliance. The Titus Oates plot and the passing of the welcome Habeas Corpus Act—second only in importance to the greater Magna Charta—are matters of history. Colonel Blood and others owed their lives to the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act.

FALSELY CONVICTED: FATAL EFFECT.

It was not for long, however, as the notorious Colonel was arrested and tried on a charge of being concerned in a plot against the life of his friend the Duke of Buckingham. He was found guilty, but released on finding surety for £10,000. The effect of the false charge upon the health of Colonel Blood was most marked. He had long been a willing tool of the Duke's, undertaken many disguises in Royal circles on his behalf, and the charge of plotting against his "greatest friend"

proved too much for him. The strain was too great, and his health gave way under it. He sickened and died "in a state of lethargy," on August 24th, 1680, and thus ended one of the most notorious careers of the 17th century.

REMARKABLE SIZE OF HIS THUMBS.

Sensation dogged this amazing person to the very end—and even after his body had been interred. The rumour gained currency that it was not the real Colonel Blood that had been buried after all, and so persistent was it that exhumation was decided upon and relatives called to identify the remains. The only proof that the now decaying body was that of the notorious Colonel Blood was the abnormal size of his thumbs. The sight of his hands having banished all doubt, the body was re-interred in Tothill's fields in September, 1680.

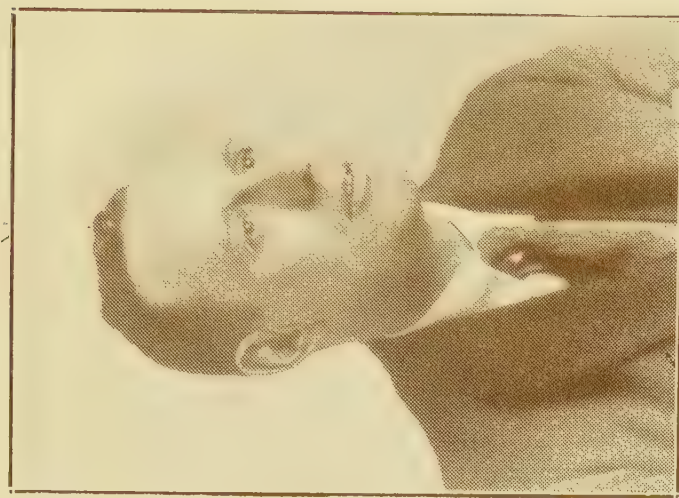
A REMARKABLE EPITAPH.

Here lies the man, who boldly hath run through
More villainies than ever England knew,
And nere to any friend he had was true,
Here let him then by all unpittied lye,
And let's rejoice his time was come to dye.



Dr. R. B. SEPHTON, J.P.

Diocesan Conference Representative for the
Parish of Newchurch.



PAUL PETERS, Esquire,

Diocesan Conference Representative for the
Parish of Newchurch.



The late Mr. JOHN PLANT.

The Polished Brass Alms Dish in Church is presented by Mrs. M. J. Plant to the memory of the late Mr. John Plant, father of the present Rector.

The Alms Dish is 17 inches in diameter, and engraved upon it is the design of the Virgin Mother, with arms extended, standing on a tessellated marble pavement between two stone pillars, one of which is charged with a Church. The porchway is surmounted with a mitre, and at the base is the Arms of Sodor and Man. Round the border of the alms dish is engraved old symbolical designs from different parts of Manx-land.



Mrs. M. J. PLANT.

**DISTINGUISHED CAREER OF FORMER CURATE
BISHOP OF THE ISLE OF MAN
CELEBRITY AND SAINT
NATIONAL MEMORIAL IN MANXLAND
MEMORIAL WINDOW AT NEWCHURCH**

THE character closely identified with the ancient parish of Newchurch-Kenyon, immediately following the Cromwellian period of history, is that of Thomas Wilson, a former curate, whose memory is cherished with affection in a much wider sphere than the country parish where he began his distinguished career. In contrast with the character of Colonel Blood, whose courtship and marriage with Maria Holcroft, eldest daughter of a former Squire of Culcheth, have been the subjects of previous chapters, that of the Rev. Thomas Wilson, is justly entitled to the appellation of the Saint. The ancient parish is thus closely linked with characters, aptly described as the "Sinner and the Saint" in its long historical records.

A DISTINGUISHED CURATE.

Born in the pretty village of Burton, in Wirral, Cheshire, on December 20th, 1663, "of honest parents, fearing God"—to use his own words—Thomas Wilson, the fifth son of Nathaniel Wilson, a yeoman of Burton, and Alice Sherlock, of Oxton, his wife, attended a private school at Chester before he was removed to Trinity College, Dublin, to study physic and afterwards divinity. He was ordained a deacon on June 29th, 1686, and leaving Ireland soon after, he was licensed in December to the curacy of Newchurch, in the Parish of Winwick, of which his maternal uncle, Dr. Sherlock, was then rector, at the small stipend of £30 a year. He lived with his uncle and set apart one-tenth of his income for charitable purposes. He was ordained priest on October 20th, 1689, and within three years his amiable deportment had recommended him to the ninth Earl of Derby to be chaplain. He was soon elected master of the Alms House at Latham, which augmented his income by £20 a year. He accordingly increased his allowance for pious and charitable uses to one-fifth.

DECLINED AND AFTERWARDS ACCEPTED A BISHOPRIC.

The Earl of Derby offered to the young curate of Newchurch the rectory of Badsworth in Yorkshire, which he respectfully declined, and later, regarding his motives in the right light, his lordship offered

to Thomas Wilson, a young curate in his early thirties, the Bishopric of the Isle of Man. He at first declined on the score of modesty, but on Archbishop Sharp complaining of the long vacancy, King William insisted upon Lord Derby immediately nominating a bishop or he would do so himself. The Rev. Thomas Wilson, after first being created LL.D. by Archbishop Tenison on January 15th, 1697, was confirmed Bishop of Sodor and Man at Bow Church and consecrated the next day at the Savoy Church by Archbishop Sharp.

BISHOP IN HIS 35TH YEAR.

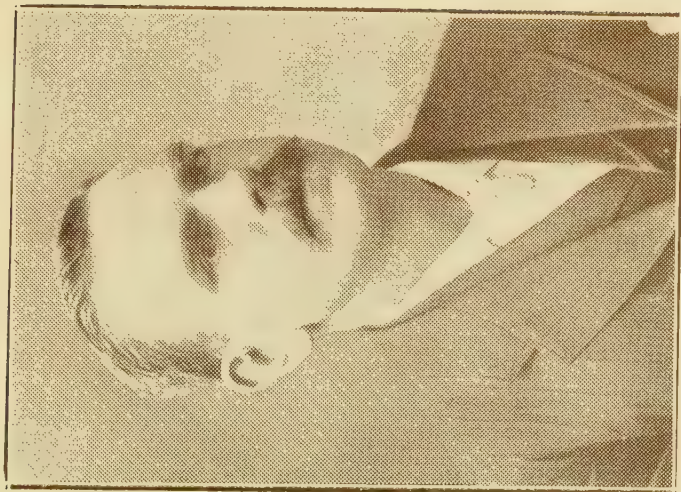
Thus, the Rev. Thomas Wilson, curate of Newchurch, became one of the youngest Bishops the Church of England has known, and on April 5th, 1698, when not 35 years of age, he arrived in his diocese, and within a week was enthroned in the Cathedral of St. German in Peel Castle. He expended the sum of £1,400 on his palace, which was in a ruinous condition, and the demesne lands, &c. The living of Badsworth was offered to him a second time, but he again refused it. On July 16th, 1698, the new Bishop laid the foundation stone of a new chapel at Castletown.

HIS MARRIAGE AT WINWICK.

In September of the same year the Bishop of Sodor and Man returned to England, and on October 27th was married at Winwick to Mary, daughter of Mr. Thomas Patten, of Warrington, and returned to his diocese in April, 1699. Two sons and two daughters were born of the marriage, but only the youngest son, Thomas, born August 24th, 1703, survived, and he became a distinguished cleric like his father, as Prebendary of Westminster and Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook.

MANY REFORMS AND NEW CHURCHES.

The episcopate of Bishop Wilson was marked by a number of reforms in the Isle of Man. New churches were built, libraries founded, and books were printed in Manx, his "Principles and Duties of Christianity" (London, 1707), being the first book published in that language. He also encouraged farming, and set the example of planting fruit and forest trees. In order to restore discipline in the island he drew up, in 1704, his well-known "Ecclesiastical Constitutions." He had the year previous obtained the Act of Settlement which is mentioned in his history of the Isle of Man. His wife died at Warrington, the Bishop having accompanied her to the place of her nativity some months before, on March 7th, 1704.



MR. JAMES ORME,
Organist and Choirmaster.
Mr. James Orme has presided at the organ
for a period of 38 years.



MR. W. A. BOSTOCK,
Sidesman and Secretary of the Parochial
Church Council.



The Head Mistress of our Newchurch Church
of England Infant Day School,
Miss OLIVE LONGWORTH.
Appointed August 1st, 1925.



The Head Master of our Newchurch Church
of England Senior Day School,
Mr. W. J. KING, B.A.
Appointed March 1st, 1928.

PREACHED BEFORE QUEEN ANNE.

Three years later he was made a Doctor of Divinity in full convocation, at Oxford, and the same honour was decreed him at Cambridge on June 11th. Being at London, he preached before Queen Anne on Holy Thursday. He declined an English Bishopric, and could never be induced to take his seat in the House of Lords. In the year 1716 he increased his charity donations to three-tenths, and two years later to four-tenths of his rent, one-tenth of the demesne and customs, and one-fifth of his English estate. King George the First offered him the See of Exeter, which he declined, preferring to continue to carry on his good work in the Isle of Man.

IMPRISONED IN CASTLE RUSHEN.

The revenues of the See did not exceed £300 per annum, out of which the Bishop clothed the naked and fed the hungry, &c. The judgments of his courts often brought him into conflict with the governors of the island, and in 1722 he was even imprisoned for a time in Castle Rushen. In 1737, however, the jurisdiction of the civil and spiritual courts was better defined by new statutes, the lordship of the island having passed in 1736 to James Murray, second Duke of Atholl, with whom Bishop Wilson had no personal difficulties.

LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND.

His last visit to England, when he stayed for some time with his son, was particularly noticed by King George II and his Queen. The Bishop's assiduity in securing his clergy their revenues on the death of the Earl of Derby in 1739, and the assistance he was able to render to the people in a time of drought and famine in 1741 are brilliantly illuminated parts of a noble character. One can well imagine that he would visit the scene of his first curacy and note the changes that had been effected in the ancient parish.

MEMORIAL MANX THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL.

Bishop Wilson has been described by Dean Farrar as "the last survivor of the saints of the English Church," whilst John Henry Newman said of him: "Burning indeed and shining, like the Baptist, in an evil time, he seemeth as if a beacon lighted on his small island to show what his Lord and Saviour could do in spite of man." In 1749, on Zingendorf's invitation, he accepted the title of Antistes, which is synonym for bishop in the Moravian Church. One of the glories of an exceedingly busy and distinguished life was to witness the translation into the Manx language of the Gospels. He died on March 7th, 1755, in the 93rd year of his age and the 58th year of his consecration, and was interred in the graveyard of Kirk Michael, Isle of Man. Over his grave is a marble monument with the modest inscription he so justly deserved: "Let this island speak the truth." It may also be stated that the Isle of Man Theological College is called to this day, in his memory, the "Bishop Wilson School."

INTERESTING RECORDS IN PARISH REGISTERS

HOW NEWCHURCH DERIVED ITS NAME

CURIOUS SPELLINGS OF NAMES

UNSCRUPULOUS PARISH CLERK

REVIEW OF THREE CENTURIES

THE Newchurch Parish Registers have been most carefully preserved, and a note on the inside of the first volume, initialled "T.W.," records the fact that it was newly-bound in 1688. The register, which is bound in old calf, consists of 57 leaves of parchment $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches by six, with two leaves of paper of similar size and five leaves (one cut) $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches by four. The registers date from 1599. It was during the time of the Rev. Thomas Wilson, who became chaplain to the ninth Earl of Derby, and afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man, that the tower was built, Newchurch then being a chapelry. There is no definite record of the dedication of the new church, but it is easy to imagine how Newchurch derives its name. Winwick was the old Parish Church, and prior to the erection of the new Church at Culcheth—church in the wood—people from the village would attend there for worship. The new church at Culcheth would afterwards claim their allegiance—hence the village and the subsequent parish undoubtedly derived their names from the new church.

INTERESTING RECORDS IN PARISH REGISTERS.

Detailed reference has already been made to several notable entries in the Parish Registers. It is recorded that Colonel Blood's eldest son, Thomas, was baptised at Newchurch on March 30th, 1651. Inquiry into the subsequent fortunes of the family of Blood, reveals the fact that one of the notorious Colonel's younger sons, Holcroft Blood, had a distinguished military career. He commanded the artillery at the Battle of Blenheim, rose to the rank of Major-General, and died without issue in Brussels in 1707. His elder brother, Thomas Blood, junior, born at Holcroft Hall, Culcheth, who was a party with his father in the attack on the Duke of Ormonde, in London, and the theft of the Crown jewels, had a son, who became Captain Edward Blood, of Albany, N.Y.

REMARKABLE ERRORS OF SPELLING.

It is perhaps not to be wondered at so much that there are so many remarkable errors in spelling in the early records in the Parish Registers. It is, moreover, quite a curiosity in its way that in the lists of births



THE RECTOR, ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER, GENTLEMEN, LADIES AND BOYS OF THE CHOIR, 1928.
 Back Row.—Standing: Mr. J. Hurst, Mr. E. Thomason, Mr. F. Thomason, Mr. H. Thomason.
 Mr. T. Yates, Mr. E. Parnell.
 Ladies.—Standing: Miss G. Runcorn, Miss G. Beckett, Miss H. Cooper, Mrs. J. Orme, Miss L. Griffiths,
 Miss A. Lowe, Mrs. T. Yates, Miss D. Yates, Miss M. J. Cleworth.
 Choir Boys.—Standing Messrs. T. Gould, J. Gibbons, H. Gould, E. Cleworth, E. Thomason, S. Green.
 Seated: Eric Cleworth, Mr. W. Thomason, The Rector, Mr. James Orme, George Gregson.



THE SIDESMEN AND MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

Standing: Mr. H. O. Tong (verger and sexton), Mr. B. Clarke, Mr. T. Grimshaw, the Rev. O. R. Plant (rector),
Mr. C. F. Harrison, Mr. W. Cooper, Mr. A. Parker, Mr. R. Mason.
Seated: Mr. W. Tant, Mr. J. Orme (organist), Mr. J. Thompson, Mr. G. Hampson, Mr. W. Hayes, Mr. T.
Unsworth, Mr. W. A. Bostock.

are records of children of Papists and Presbyterians, which one scarcely expects to meet with in Parish Registers. The former extend from June 24th, 1699, to February 23rd, 1705-6, and the latter, commencing on the same date, are continued up to February 7th, 1718-19. Their inclusion can only be accounted for by the desire of the clergy at that time to make the Parish Register as complete a record as possible. It is obvious the school master was not busy in those early days.

AN EXPERT IN CACOGRAPHY.

Probably one, John Monks, who for 42 years discharged the duties of Parish Clerk, "took the cake" for cacography, though neither his predecessors nor his successors in that office are by no means immune from gross spelling errors. It may be stated that the earlier entries in Latin are neatly written by scholarly ecclesiastical hands, and present a striking contrast to the sprawling unscholarly efforts of many of the Parish Clerks. A few examples from the entries by the said John Monks are too glaring to pass unnoticed. The word "baptised" becomes distorted into "babptized," "bpaptized," "paptized," "baptezed," and "baptizad." The month of February appears in various forms—"Febury," "Febeury," "Feburley," and "Feburaray." Burials, too, are entered under a wonderful array of headings, including "buirels," "buirals," "buiarales," "buiarils," and "buiarles." In one place is found "Jackey Els John," in another "John Rouboton Els Jaeckey."

REMARKABLE VARIANTS OF SURNAMES.

The proverbial Philadelphia lawyer would be puzzled to make out some of the surnames recorded, of which there is a numerous and remarkable variant to be found in the index. Strange disguises characterise the records of many Christian names. To quote a few. "Moyels" and "Geoyels" are written, no doubt, to indicate the local pronunciation at the time of Miles and Giles respectively, and although the following examples are certainly monstrosities in spelling, they perhaps sufficiently closely resemble the correct form as to require no explanation:—Eizabell, Eziball, Eligjah, Benjuman, Lydaiah, Lusey, Lorans, Ginney, Lissey, Daived, Nicklas, Samull, Samuewell, Reachill, Phabey, Shusan, Shushann, Chatrine, Caktirn, Rebecak, Rebecakah, Tabathey, Aliksander, and Greace. The word "Papist" is controverted into "Papass," but in all this confusion of shocking spelling, the transformation of Eccles into "Ecakes" will probably be regarded by readers as a masterpiece.

COMICAL AS WELL AS ANNOYING.

These extracts give an insight into the comical as well as the annoying side of the life of a country parish clergyman. The tedium of the work of deciphering many of the records must be great, and it cannot be an easy matter in numerous instances to obtain absolutely correct details of some of the entries. Spelling reform, and later education, have simplified matters a great deal. Bad spelling is by no means the worst feature of the imperfectly performed duties of the Parish Clerks of Newchurch centuries ago. There is evidence of the registers having been tampered with for considerations of filthy lucre.

EVIDENCE OF FORGED ENTRIES.

Much less than 100 years ago a reward was offered for information as to John and Richard Jenkinson, whose heirs were entitled to a considerable sum of money. Forged entries of their respective baptisms may be found in the Parish Registers of Newchurch. Many false insertions have, moreover, been detected under the name of Flitcroft, members of which family had emigrated to America. Their descendants have been supplied, as the result of such fraudulent practices, with much valueless genealogical information.

“ CELEBRATED BAGPIPE PLEAR.”

Trades and professions are not often noted in the Parish Registers, but among them may be found references to one blacksmith, brazier or brasfer, butcher, linnen weaver, maidservant, husband-man, millner, clerk, sexton, taylor and wheelwright; and in 1805 Peter Thomason is described as “ the celebrated bagpipe plear.” The clergy are variously designated as curate, incumbent, ecclesiast(es), pastor or vicar. The title “ revrand ” is first mentioned in 1773. A number of wayfarers are interred in the churchyard, one of them being described as Wm. ———, an Irishman. Not often are the causes of death named, but a solitary case is attributed in each instance to old age and drowning; one man in 1729 was killed and another was hanged in 1708. “ Febur,” presumably intended fever, accounts for another death.

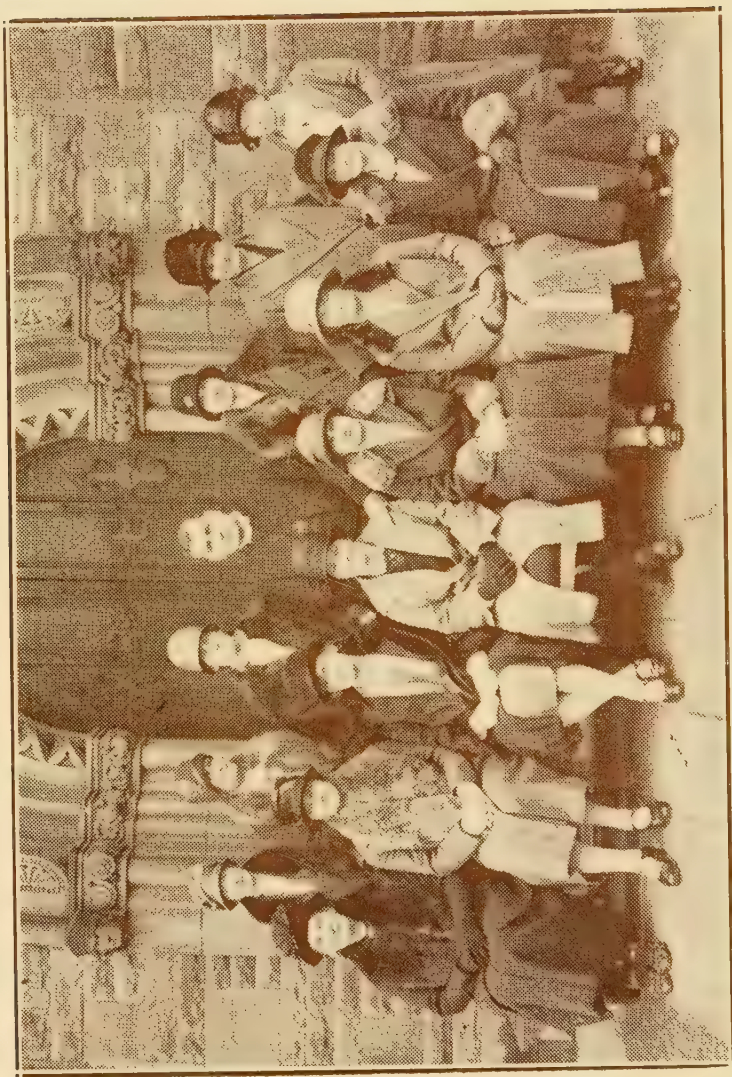
A GLIMPSE OF PASSING EVENTS.

The Parish Registers afford a glimpse of passing events in bygone days. On November 6th, 1642, for example, Geoffrey, son of James Bell, was baptised, his father having been slain in Ireland, where it is possible that, as a Protestant settler in Ulster, he may have fallen a victim to the fury of the Romanists, who, is it recorded, massacred 40,000 of them. A single line records the rebuilding of the Church in 1743, and the late Rev. Dr. Black has inserted an interesting statement that in the previous year at Soham Church, near Ely, a brief for this



THE TEAM OF BELL-RINGERS OF OUR CHURCH

Standing: Mr. W. Gould (second bell), Mr. F. Reynolds (treble bell), Mr. J. Yates (fifth bell), Mr. T. Grimshaw (sixth bell), Mr. W. Haines (third bell)
 Seated: Mr. E. Leatherbarrow (second bell), Mr. W. Leatherbarrow (third bell), Mr. J. Leatherbarrow (third bell), conductor.



THE LADY MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

Standing: Mrs. Winn, Mrs. Scoffin, Mrs. Thompson, the Rector, Mrs. Grundy, Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Tant.
 Seated: Mrs. T. Green, Mrs. Winward, Miss Plant, Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. F. Reynolds, Miss Coleclough, Mrs. T. Unsworth.

purpose resulted in the collection of one shilling and sixpence. It is also placed on record that a brief was issued under the great seal for the benefit of the inhabitants of Heydon (Hedon) in Yorkshire, and on March 29th, 1658-59, was responded to by the parishioners of Newchurch to the extent of six shillings and twopence.

“STOCKE MONEY.”

A number of entries, ranging from 1640 to 1685, refer to the “stocke money”—a fund to be applied to the maintenance of the curate. This was apparently lent at the rate of six per cent. interest per annum.

NOTABLE INTERMENTS.

Reference has already been made to many notable families of the parish. Coming to more recent records, there is one relating to the interment in the graveyard of the church, where he faithfully ministered for many years, and left an honoured memory, of the Rev. Dr. Black, whose son, known as “Father” Black, gained much prominence through his public protests against the re-marriage of divorced persons; and “Sammy Buttercup,” a well-known Lancashire dialect sketch writer. The Rev. Dr. Black, to whose memory a stained-glass window has been erected in the Church, was Rector of Newchurch from 1860 to 1897, being succeeded at his death by the Rev. E. W. Whittenbury-Kaye, who was rector at the time the ancient church was destroyed by fire, and took a very prominent part, as many old parishioners well remember, in the building and opening of the handsome new Church of which the foundation stone was laid on Tuesday, October 18th, 1903, by the Right Hon. the Earl of Lathom, P.G.W., R.W., Provincial Grand Master of West Lancashire Freemasons, and an address on the occasion was delivered by the Lord Bishop of Liverpool, the late Right Rev. Francis James Chavasse, D.D.

THE NEWCHURCH MEMORIAL.

A fitting memorial exists in the Parish Church in the shape of a beautiful three-light stained-glass window in the south aisle on the east side. The centre light is figurative of Bishop Wilson himself vested in cope and mitre and holding the crozier in his right hand, flanked by representations of St. Paul and St. Luke. The inscription at the base of the window is: “To the Glory of God, and in memory of Thomas Wilson, D.D., curate of Newchurch, 1686-1692, Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man, 1697-1755.”

There is also preserved in the vestry a valuable quarto engraving of the distinguished cleric in his episcopal habit.

THE NEW RECTOR.

The Rev. E. W. Whittenbury-Kaye resigned the living in 1925, and was succeeded by the present Rector, the Rev. Oscar Reginald Plant, on February 1st, 1925, and was instituted and inducted by the Right Rev. Dr. A. A. David, Lord Bishop of Liverpool, in the presence of a large and distinguished congregation.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CHOIR.

The Rev. O. R. Plant had not been long in the parish before improvements were effected in the choir and their equipment. New cassocks and surplices were supplied and the 10 young lady members provided with 16th century scarlet robes, caps and white jabots, and the choir boys with white neckruffs, which produce uniformity and are possibly an aid to worship. At all events the change has been much appreciated by the large congregations who attend the Sunday services. The Church was also provided with new hymn and prayer books, and a new silver chalice and paten was generously presented by Miss C. Withington in memory of her brother Arthur. A new Bible for the lectern was also given by Miss Withington in honour of her father's memory; and a new flag of St. George and the Union Jack were presented by two donors in the parish for the Church tower; whilst two "Pictus Sertus" mosaic panels have been placed in the reredos by members of the Black family to the memory of the late Mrs. Charles Crofton Black.

THANKSGIVING GIFTS.

As a thanksgiving to Almighty God a beautiful stained-glass window, "Christ Blessing the Children," is placed in the Church porch; oak panelling is being erected round the four walls in the bell-ringers' chamber in the belfry; electric light is being placed in the Church in place of the oil lamps, and fifty trees are being planted round the edge of the churchyard, all in commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the Parish and the Silver Jubilee of the present Church. Truly, wonderful gifts from the parishioners of Newchurch, past and present.



THE NEWCHURCH PARISH CHURCH TROOP OF BOY SCOUTS.
Colours of the Troop are Royal Blue edged with Gold.

COTTAGE HOMES AT CULCHETH LANCs. FOR THE
SALFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS: DESIGNED BY J. H. COOPER



THE CULCHETH COTTAGE HOMES OF THE SALFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

KQ-820-447

